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The Week

THE Italian-Ethiopian affair continued last week to be the outstanding European development. Next in importance came the riots in France, induced by the government's attempt to carry out the strict deflationary policy recently adopted. In Germany, the Hitler government implacably continued its course of bitter hostility toward Jews, Catholics, evangelical Protestants, the Steel Helmets and, of course, Socialists and Communists. The Japanese bureaucracy expressed some further indignation regarding the levity directed by Americans against the sacred person of Emperor Hirohito, and showed signs of rapidly extending its resentment to all unfavorable comment upon Japan, its government or its policy.

IN THE United States, the work-relief dispute and the tax bill (which we discuss elsewhere in this issue) have dominated public attention during the past seven days. The increased taxes on small incomes, inserted in the bill by the Senate Finance Committee have produced a revolt both in that body and in the House, forcing the Committee to beat a hasty and abject retreat. In the dispute over work-relief wages, the President appears to be winning by sheer power, but it is a victory that may cost him dear. The investigation of lobbying by the public utilities has turned up two more former government officials who have received large sums to fight the Wheeler-Rayburn bill, Patrick J. Hurley, Mr. Hoover's Secretary of War, and Joseph P. Tumulty, Secretary to President Wilson. The Board of Tax Appeals has at last handed down a decision in the case of Charles E. Mitchell, former head of the National City Bank. He must pay $1,200,000 in back taxes and penalties for the years 1929 and 1930; it is announced that he will appeal from the decision of the Board. The social-security bill is at last ready for the President's signature; its form was little changed by the conference committee except that Senator Clark's amendment, providing for the continuance of existing private pension plans, was dropped. The State of Pennsylvania has passed a remarkable law providing heavy penalties for discrimination by hotels, restaurants, theatres, etc., against Negroes. An ominous straw in the wind, the strike in a suburb of Detroit against the high price of meat, continues with the customary charges that it is "inspired by radicals."

IT IS now quite clear that Ethiopia will receive no real help from the League of Nations and little or none from England and France, acting separately or together. If these two powers do in fact put pressure on Italy, it will not be because they respect the independence of Ethiopia and regard Italy's actions as one of the most wanton pieces of imperialistic aggression in modern times. It will, on the contrary, be only because they fear the Italian dictator may weaken his country as regards the common front against Hitler and particularly against Nazi ambitions to rule Austria. It is quite possible that the Geneva Conference which opens this week, not under League auspices—a conference in which England, France and Italy will discuss the question without Ethiopia's presence or consent—may carve up that unhappy African kingdom until there is little or nothing left. Only two factors favor the Ethiopian cause: the difficulties presented by the terrain to an invading army composed mainly

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of Europeans, and Italy's extremely bad internal economic and financial position. While his troubles at home may have impelled Mussolini to make a war, they may also force him to keep it short and perhaps to terminate it with a fictitious victory that would in reality be a defeat. England and France have one strong card if they dare to play it: they could close the Suez Canal to Italian troop ships and to those now beginning to pass through in increasing numbers, bringing home the invalided members of the Italian expeditionary force. But European political motives will probably prevail, and this action will not be taken.

FROM the beginning, President Roosevelt has been determined to pay those employed on work-relief projects in wages substantially lower than the going rates in private industry. We have repeatedly pointed out in The New Republic the reasons for believing that this is unwise social policy, and shall not recite the argument again. The President's purpose of course is to make sure that those on relief will accept jobs in private industry when these (if any) are available. The result of his plan, however, is undoubtedly to break down wage scales that have been built up by slow and painful trade-union activity over many years. The policy is rendered all the more unsound by the fact that it applies to only part of the unemployed who have been put to work on government projects. The Public Works Administration maintains standard hourly wages on its projects throughout the United States, although the number of hours worked per month is kept small. Trade unions all over the country are now protesting the President's policy. Those who refuse to work under it are denied any further federal relief and there is a good chance that all other state or municipal assistance will be withheld from them. The trade unionists call the policy "work or starve." At the same time, leaders of the A.F. of L. are obviously afraid to become involved, believing that the President has the whip-hand and that resistance is hopeless.

THE policy of deflation on which the French government has decided bears disastrously on the poorer part of the population, and worst of all, at least at the beginning, upon government employees. It is not hard for officials to decree cuts in wages and salaries but it is enormously hard to make good on the supplementary promise to reduce the cost of living. The announced cuts in their pay, and the general economic situation, produced demonstrations of protest this week among workers in navy yards and munitions plants, and brief strikes among marine workers. These demonstrations were forcibly suppressed, several people were killed and large numbers injured. While the situation is temporarily quiet, it remains potentially a dangerous one. The Socialists and Communists combined in the United Front are being damned by reactionaries for having fomented the demonstrations, while they are criticized by some impatient radicals in other countries for not having forced the issue, on the ground that their temporizing tactics increase the danger of a fascist coup. Obviously, you cannot have it both ways. The truth seems to be that the United Front believes it has a good chance of winning the next election, and is steering a careful course for that reason. It supports the economic demands of the workers, but violence is the last thing it wants. No doubt its leaders are also influenced by the Russo-French alliance and the danger presented by Hitlerized Germany; it is probable that the Nazis would take instant advantage of the temporary weakness that would be produced in France by a revolutionary attempt from the Left. Even the most daring man steps gingerly in a powder mine.

DELAY and indecision have somehow bedeviled the Roosevelt labor policy from the beginning, and it would seem that these twin evils are still at work. More than six weeks have elapsed since the enactment of the Wagner labor-disputes bill, but as yet no attempt at improvement has been made, chiefly because the President has failed to appoint a new labor board. Obviously, this delay has given reactionary employers an added period of grace in which to entrench themselves by intimidating their employees. And the opportunity has not been wasted, to judge from the complaints of labor leaders against increasing unfairness and discharges. No doubt the main reason for Mr. Roosevelt's failure to appoint a board more speedily is the great difficulty he is having in finding outstanding men to serve. The experiences of Lloyd Garrison and Francis Biddle were not of the sort to make anyone eager for the job. Repeatedly, these men found themselves unsupported by the President—as in the Jennings case—and forced to beat an embarrassing retreat. Accordingly, it is just possible that Mr. Roosevelt might have more success in getting appointees of ability and integrity if he were to make it crystal clear that the new board will have a free hand—at least as far as the administration is concerned. Even with this assurance it may be difficult enough to get a good board, for it is almost certain that no effective work will be possible until the constitutionality of the Wagner Act is determined. Many who might otherwise be willing to serve are not anxious to twiddle their thumbs in Washington for a year or more until the Supreme Court decides whether the government has the power to govern.

THE strike at the New York Shipbuilding Company's yards in Camden, New Jersey, has become a test of the administration's sincerity in labor policy. The company, which is almost wholly dependent for its profits upon the fifty million dollars' worth of warship contracts that it holds from the government, has been aggressively opposed to unionism. Mr. E. L. Cord, owner of a controlling interest in the company, has repeatedly refused to

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deal with the union representatives. Last week Mr. Roosevelt indicated that he was at last prepared to intervene in the strike on the workers' behalf. The Navy Department dispatched a so-called ultimatum to the company, demanding that the dispute be arbitrated. When the terms of the ultimatum became known, however, it was found that no provision had been made for union recognition. The company gratefully accepted the Navy Department's proposals, which have since been rejected by the strikers. It is reported that the Navy Department acted without consultation with Mr. Roosevelt, and that he was unaware of the terms that were laid down. Since the right of workers to have representatives of their own choosing is supposed to be the basis of the administration's labor policy, and since the strikers are overwhelmingly behind the union, it is hard to see how Mr. Roosevelt can delay any longer in forcing the company to grant the union recognition that the strikers demand. How can the strikers arbitrate the question whether the organization through which they forced the issue and obtained arbitration, is the organization that represents them?

PRAISE is due Governor Bibb Graves for his veto of the Alabama anti-sedition bill. Passed by the legislature under pressure from the American Legion, the bill would have made almost any form of radical activity punishable by a year's imprisonment and a $1,000 fine. "We have sufficient law to curb radicals on the statute books now," Governor Graves remarked drily. "To enact further law would reflect on the ability of our judges to enforce it." Only two days before he vetoed the anti-sedition bill, Governor Graves refused protection to a group of writers representing the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners who had come to Alabama to protest against it, and whose automobile had been fired upon by gangsters. The Alabama Federation of Labor displayed unwonted militancy in its opposition to the anti-sedition bill, which seems to have aroused and united the liberal elements of the state to a heartening degree. In commenting upon Governor Graves's veto, the American Civil Liberties Union points out that during the last few months Governor Talmadge of Georgia has vetoed an anti-sedition bill passed by the legislature with large majorities, and that the Arkansas Senate has defeated a similar measure after its approval by the House. Anti-sedition laws introduced in the Florida and Texas legislatures also have been defeated.

CONGRESSMAN Adolph J. Sabath of Illinois, chairman of the Committee to Investigate Real-Estate Bondholders' Reorganizations, has recently introduced a bill (H.R. 7894) "to prevent the excessive loss of assets in connection with reorganizations. . . ." His committee has not yet completed its investigation, but from several printed volumes of testimony already at hand and from hearings in several cities, there is ample proof of the fact that investors in real-estate bonds not only have been subjected to the general process of deflation but, in addition, have been exploited by self-appointed protective committees, which have made huge and exorbitant fees out of imposed settlements. The Sabath bill aims to correct this evil by bringing reorganization of defaulted mortgage issues under the scrutiny of a federal agency. To this end the bill proposes that the Securities and Exchange Commission or the Comptroller of the Currency, whichever the President may designate, be made "Conservator," and be empowered to approve or disapprove real-estate-mortgage reorganization plans. This scrutiny will apply to cases where the refinancing is made directly or indirectly out of federal funds. That is to say, a loan secured through any agency that has borrowed from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation will come under the Conservator's jurisdiction, just as if the loan were made directly by the federal organization. The author of the bill feels that this should catch between 75 and 80 percent of all reorganizations. The right of review is made retroactive to July 1, 1934. This is designed to bring up for examination a number of settlements rushed through before the Committee started its investigation.

IT IS admitted that the bill has little chance of passing before Congress adjourns, but its retroactive clause, if retained, will make the delay more palatable. If the legislators get around to it, when the atmosphere is less torrid in Washington, they will probably see little reason for opposing it. Will the bill help bondholders? The Committee states that 4,000,000 individuals invested approximately $8,000,000,000 in real-estate bonds. A trading and liquidation process has been going on for several years, and it is more than likely that a vast majority of the original investors have already disposed of their securities at very low rates. On the other hand, the bill can certainly do no harm. It will undoubtedly help some of the present holders of bonds and there might be among them a number who are financially distressed. The new set-up will give jobs to a few lawyers, investigators and clerks. It is as good a way as any of spending a million dollars.

THE second large-scale rent strike within a year may take place this September at Knickerbocker Village, model housing development in New York's Lower East Side. The Fred F. French Company, a billion-dollar corporation which built the place with $8,000,000 of R.F.C. funds, is out to smash the Knickerbocker Village Tenants' Association in precisely the same way that bosses attempt to smash unions—by firing the leaders. It has refused to renew the leases of fifteen leaders of the K.V.T.A. The tenants' association was organized last fall as the result of a rent strike which forced the management to concede a half-month's rent because apart-

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ments had been opened for occupancy before they were completed. Since then there has been frequent conflict with the management, such as the successful demand by the K.V.T.A. that the auditorium provided in the original plans not be converted into a storeroom for a grocery store. The K.V.T.A. set up cultural organizations and published a newspaper in opposition to the management paper. The letter sent to the fifteen refusing to renew their leases was delightfully simple. These people had made complaints; obviously, the letter pointed out, they are not happy in Knickerbocker Village; it would be better for all concerned if they were to move where they could be happy. The K.V.T.A., which represents about a third of the 4,000 tenants, is fighting back. Petitions are being circulated, mass meetings are held, a picket line marches in front of the renting office. Meanwhile the management blandly signs leases for the apartments of the fifteen and works the Red herring overtime through its paper. Although it is undeniably true that a Communist bloc has captured the K.V.T.A. and has made partisan use of the newspaper and the current-events club, the majority of the tenants realize that the fight is purely one of tenants' rights. Tenants' organizations will doubtless be formed in other large government housing projects, many of which are already under way.

CHARLES KRUMBEIN is still confined in the federal penitentiary at Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, pending action on his application for parole. A year ago he pleaded guilty to a charge of using a false name on his passport, and was given the unprecedented sentence of eighteen months in prison, to be followed by four years on probation, making a total of five and one-half years under surveillance. Krumbein happens to be a member of the Communist Party, and for years has taken an active part in labor struggles. In 1930 he wished to make a tour of China and other countries to study the international labor movement at first hand, and sought to protect himself by applying for a passport under the name of Albert E. Stewart. This was his actual offense, but at the trial the prosecution very ostentatiously brought out the record of his activities on behalf of American workers and read the platform of the Communist Party. The severity of the resulting sentence shows rather clearly that Krumbein was punished not so much for his real offense as for his political beliefs. The procedure in Krumbein's case contrasts strikingly with that followed in the case of Thomas Walker, who gained notoriety as the author of a series of highly exaggerated stories of famine in the Soviet Union published by the Hearst press. Walker's real name is Robert Green, and his record includes a year in prison in Texas for violation of the Mann Act and two years in the penitentiary in Colorado for forgery before he broke jail and eventually blossomed forth as a Hearst journalist. Walker, a known criminal, arraigned on the same charge of falsifying a passport, was let off with a suspended sentence. Krumbein, active friend of the working classes, was sent to prison for a long term. In the interests of simple justice, the least the Federal Parole Board could do would be to grand parole.

CANADA'S national railway system, once a decided challenge to private ownership and operation, is facing a crisis. The system is composed of a number of broken-down, ill assorted and extravagantly built (under private ownership) roads that were never intended to comprise a single system, and it is saddled with a capital structure out of all proportion to its value or earning power. In spite of these handicaps, the energetic management of the late Sir Henry Thornton built up the system to a point where it was in a fair way to become a dangerous competitor of the privately owned Canadian Pacific Railway. The depression, however, plunged it into the red, and deficits, piling up annually, have given opponents of public ownership their chance. Sir Edward Beatty, president of the Canadian Pacific Railway, has been traveling back and forth across the country advocating a "unification scheme," under C.P.R. management, and has thrown the immense propaganda resources of his company into the fight. His plan receives the open or tacit support of most of the powerful financial interests in Canada, and meanwhile the advocates of government ownership have no such spokesman and no such resources. The present unpopular Bennett government, although elected on a railway policy of "amalgamation never; competition ever," is strangely passive on this issue. The Liberals, who seem likely to win the next election, are no less wedded to the capitalist system than their Conservative opponents. Both parties, for political reasons, pay lip-service to government ownership, but the only really wholehearted advocacy comes from the socialist Coöperative Commonwealth Federation, whose strength as a party lies mainly in western Canada. Meanwhile the situation is becoming so acute that there is strong talk of forming a national government—which would almost certainly institute some weak-kneed system of amalgamation to liquidate the "failure" of government ownership of railways.

ON May 29 the Federal Power Commission denied the application of the Pigeon River Lumber Company for a permit to erect a series of power dams along the Pigeon River in northern Minnesota. Though, in the mass of statements and counter-statements that poured out of Washington as the aftermath of the collapse of the N.R.A., the Commission's action attracted little attention, it was a decision of unusual public interest. For nearly eight years a group of civic and conservation organizations, under the leadership of Ernest C. Oberholtzer and of the Quetico-Superior Council, have conducted a continuous campaign for the dedication of the great border-lake region between

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Minnesota and Ontario to the public use as an international memorial forest and to prevent its exploitation by private interests for commercial profit. The movement has called forth widespread support both from the public and from government officials on both sides of the boundary, and led President Roosevelt last year to appoint a special committee to further the program. But the power interests die hard, and the Pigeon River Company's application represented their most recent effort to defeat the plans of the conservationists.

FOLLOWING the example of the International Joint Commission, which a year ago denied a similar effort sponsored by the Backus interests, the Federal Power Commisson, temporarily at least, has closed the door to the development of this region for purposes of private gain. The grounds upon which the Commission's action was based are not wholly satisfactory, for it had been hoped that the Shipstead-Nolan Act, passed by Congress in 1930, had definitely safeguarded the whole region from such encroachment and had removed it from the Commission's jurisdiction. The Commission did not adopt this view and by accepting jurisdiction it has left the door open to further controversy. Nevertheless, the decision itself marks a long step forward in the constant struggle to preserve the natural resources for the people as a whole.

Share Poverty or Produce Plenty

THE STRUGGLES of Congress with the tax bill may form the basis of a brief but valuable lesson in economics, if the necessary inferences from that experience will be drawn by the public.

The House passed a bill to enact the purpose of sharing wealth. In line with the President's ideas, it imposed higher taxes on inheritances and large profits, and higher rates of surtax, steeply graduated, on incomes from $50,000 up. These taxes are supposed to help in breaking up large fortunes. Yet, although their prospective burden is severe enough to evoke loud outcries from spokesmen of those upon whom they will fall, their net yield is estimated at not more than $275,000,000 a year. This is only a small fraction of the amount that would be necessary to extinguish the federal deficit and balance the budget. Doubtless still higher rates and more safeguards against evasion could be imposed. A somewhat larger yield is conceivable—and a larger yield is certain, if prosperity returns. Nevertheless, without continuous prosperity, the highest conceivable rates on big fortunes would hardly be enough to keep the government out of debt, especially if the government went in for paying even the minimum pittance for necessary unemployment relief and social insurance.

In order to enlarge the yield, the Senate Finance Committee added to the House bill extra taxes on smaller incomes as well. It increased the surtax rates in the lower brackets and applied them on taxable incomes as low as $3,000. It reduced the exemption from the normal tax from $2,500 to $2,000 for married persons and from $1,000 to $800 for single persons. So low is the income tapped by this draft of the bill that single men receiving work relief at the highest rate established under the new Works Progress Administration would have to pay an income tax on the money they receive from the government. This does not mean that the W.P.A. wages are high. Quite the contrary. They are so low that organized labor is justifiably conducting strikes against them. No single man can live decently, according to American standards, on $800 a year, and no family can live decently on $2,000.

The result of imposing this tax burden on those who by no conceivable stretch of the imagination can be called rich is to increase the estimated yield only to $450,000,000. This is nowhere near enough to balance the budget. Of course it supplies no basis whatever for a "share-the-wealth" program that would mean an appreciable increase in the welfare of the majority of citizens.

The first lesson from the experience applies to "share-the-wealth" philosophies, from Huey Long's to Roosevelt's. No possible program of taxation can greatly benefit the workers of the United States, at least so long as depression lasts. This is not because our wealth and income are already fairly distributed. Far from it. The difference in income between the poorest and the richest is enormous. It is because the rich are so few in numbers, as compared with the poor, that if their incomes were completely confiscated and divided equally, the increase in the lower incomes would not be very great. The trouble is partly, of course, that income is divided unequally, but there is much graver trouble in the fact that there is not enough income to divide.

The second lesson applies to those who are shrieking for a balanced budget. It is barely possible to keep the budget balanced during a depression as deep as that which the United States has just experienced, but this achievement is inconceivable without heavy sacrifices on the part of the rich and the poor alike. When we are ready to tax, not only the rich but also those in moderate and considerably less than moderate circumstances, and to make the lowest rates, not 4 percent but 20 percent, as in Great Britain, then we may aspire to duplicate Britain's budget-balancing achievement. Until the conservatives are ready to advocate this, they had better stop talking about balancing the budget. Here again, the real trouble is lack of income to tax far more than lack of high rates. It would be easy to balance the budget and keep it balanced if only we produced enough income, and produced it steadily.

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We favor income taxes as opposed to taxes on consumption. We believe that these taxes should be both more steeply graduated and more inclusive of lower incomes than under the present law—if at the same time state and local governments will abolish the sales taxes, which weigh much more heavily on the poor than income taxes possibly could. But the real problem is greatly to increase production of goods and services and so make possible the payment of taxes without hardship, and to maintain high production without slumps. The creation of a type of economy under which this problem can be solved is not being seriously proposed by President Roosevelt, by his conservative opponents, or by panacea-mongers like Huey Long. Sharing poverty is not a satisfactory substitute for producing plenty.

Rhode Island Elections and a New Party

FROM THE jubilation with which the Republicans greeted their victory in a special congressional election in Rhode Island, one would think they had already won the presidency in 1936. So bright was this flash of hope in the midst of an almost universal darkness that their tendency to overplay its importance may readily be understood. A district that in 1934 elected a Democrat by a plurality of 21,431, reversed itself this time by giving a Republican a plurality of about 13,000. As a result, The New York Herald Tribune shouted that the voters had repudiated the administration and its spending policy; the textile interests said that they had registered their unfavorable opinion of the processing tax; and the utilities declared this was a clear sign to Congress that the "death sentence" was unpopular.

Slightly more caution is required in interpreting the result, if one wants the truth rather than mere propaganda material. As to the spending policy, the successful Republican candidate advocated immediate payment of the soldiers' bonus. In conjunction with the President's recent fight against it, and unqualified support of him by the Democrat, this might have been far more influential than such remote matters as unbalanced budgets and death sentences for holding companies. Local issues undoubtedly played a part. The Republican was a law partner of the Democrat whose place he won—and the incumbent was not running for reëlection; he had been appointed to a judgeship. Still more interesting is the record of the actual vote. In 1934, the Republican candidate got 49,087 votes; in 1935 he received 48,023. Actually, you see, a loss of 1,000. He won because the Democratic vote shrank from 70,518 to 35,054.

Anyone is at liberty to interpret these figures in whatever manner he pleases. It is permissible to infer that the Republicans of 1934 voted, while many of the Democrats did not. Perhaps, since this is normally a Republican district, the organization is stronger. Probably it was better financed by the moneyed interests now so keenly hostile to the administration. This being a special election in an off year, and the administration being favored chiefly by independent voters, the lack of interest probably left the decision chiefly to dyed-in-the-wool party members, while the mavericks strayed from the corral. The Democrats may extract some comfort from such speculations, but in the long run it will not be of a solid sort.

To us, the most reasonable explanation is not flattering to either party. One cannot escape the conclusion that many former supporters of the administration have cooled toward it. Some of them undoubtedly changed their allegiance and voted for the Republican candidate; this being a special election, it is unlikely that all the Republicans of 1934 came to the polls this time. But it is probable that the majority of the disaffected simply did not care enough about the administration to come to its support, and at the same time did not wish to join the conservative opposition. Local and accidental issues must have played a part, but such a decided overturn seems to require a general explanation of this sort. In so far as the drift of the voters indicated anything, it appears to us that it registered a growing opinion in the main unfavorable to both alternatives presented to them.

This election bears a moral for those who are considering the desirability of launching a new party to the left of the Democrats, in the campaign of 1936. It is argued by some of those who favor such a party that it should for the time being confine itself to the states and not put a presidential candidate in the field. Sometimes the argument runs that Mr. Roosevelt is still so strong that to oppose him would weaken the chances of the party because many who agreed with its principles would still want to vote for him. A more frequent argument is that the President is weak enough so that a split in the progressive vote would defeat him and let in the Republicans—an eventuality to be avoided at all costs.

However, what little light is thrown on the question by the Rhode Island election indicates that both these arguments are unsound. If this election is a symptom of a general trend, it shows that Mr. Roosevelt is now so weak that there need be little fear of loss from opposing him. Not only that, but he is so weak that the Republicans may win by default even if the progressive vote is not split. Meanwhile a valuable opportunity for the new party to strike roots into the ground will have been lost, if the citizens are offered no other choice. If a labor party had been in the field in this Rhode Island election, the result would have been far more wholesome and instructive. For then the dissatisfied voters would have had some other place to go than into the ranks of those who represent the reaction against even moderate reform.

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Terror in Pennsylvania

IT IS a not infrequent characteristic of victories in social legislation that they are won when the winning is no longer of great significance, when the vital point of conflict has moved to another sphere. In large measure, this can be said of the bill recently signed by Governor Earle of Pennsylvania, which outlaws company-hired police. For while in theory the new law prevents the iron, steel and coal companies from hiring state police and using them as private armies, this restriction has little meaning today. The coal and iron police, who ruled the company towns in Pennsylvania's great industrial centers for many years and were notorious for their brutal and lawless attacks on labor, have been out of existence for several years—since Governor Pinchot refused to sanction their use. The new law, moreover, does not prevent employers from paying the salaries of deputies (appointed by, and presumably responsible only to, the sheriff) to "protect" their property. It is a practice the employers have naturally resorted to, now that they cannot hire the state police.

Thus, today it is not the coal and iron forces but the deputy sheriffs (assisted by the state police) who play the chief role in depriving miners and industrial workers of their legal rights. This was rather convincingly demonstrated in the recent strike of 9,000 miners in the hard-coal fields near Wilkes-Barre, in Luzerne County. During this strike, according to an investigation made by a commission of inquiry sent to Wilkes-Barre by the American Civil Liberties Union, the state and local police let loose a reign of terrorism rarely equaled in American labor history. To quote from the commission's report:

> Never in industrial conflict in this country, so far as we are aware, have police officers so exceeded their lawful powers so systematically as within the last four months of the strike against the Glen Alden Coal Company. Men in mining districts who appeared on their porches or in front of their homes in the early hours of the morning and were, therefore, suspected of participating in peaceful picketing have been mercilessly beaten, arrested, taken to barracks, and there subjected to third-degree barbarities. We know of no other strike in which police have attacked men, not acting in groups on a picket line, but appearing at their homes or on the streets at hours when they might approach working miners.

This indictment, it should be noted, is not the product of sensationalists. Those who made up the commission of inquiry were men of standing and reliability and included Arthur Garfield Hays, the lawyer, Professor Jesse H. Holmes of Swarthmore College, Professor Ray H. Abrams of the University of Pennsylvania, the Reverend Paul Heath of Wilkes-Barre and J. Russell McCormich, attorney, of Scranton.

The excuse for these lawless activities of the police, it seems, was that the strike itself was illegal. Early in the strike, the Glen Alden Coal Company had obtained an injunction against the United Anthracite Miners of Pennsylvania. This injunction, one of the most drastic ever issued, not only restrained the union from conducting all strike activities—even from broadcasting over the radio—but actually ordered the union officials to call the strike off. When they refused, some thirty leaders of the union were sent to jail for contempt of court.

During the four months the strike lasted—from February to June—many individuals were hunted down by the police and severely beaten, some while in their own homes. Men and women, attempting to picket, were clubbed indiscriminately, rushed off to jails—sometimes ten miles distant—and there tried and sentenced without being permitted to have counsel or witnesses. "These are the methods," declares the commission of inquiry, "of a fascist, not a democratic state." And needless to say, they were methods that finally forced the Anthracite Miners to abandon their strike.

Obviously, the extreme terrorism displayed in Luzerne County over a period of four months is hardly to be explained as accidental. On the contrary, there appears to have been a concerted move against the Anthracite Miners' Union—a militant, insurgent group whose members broke away from the United Mine Workers of America some two years ago. The police themselves, it would seem, were aware of their lawless procedure, for frequently during their assaults on the miners they had adhesive tape covering the numbers on their badges to prevent identification. Thus far, neither Governor Earle nor Major Lynn G. Adams, head of the state constabulary, has seen fit to give any satisfactory reply to the serious charges raised by the investigation or to give any assurance that the same tactics will not be resorted to again. Major Adams, in fact, has denounced the investigation and declared that he was satisfied that his men had done "their duty" well. "Some men had their heads busted," he told the Lions and Kiwanis of Wilkes-Barre, "and I believe there will be some more."

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British Taxes—and Ours

WITH FIVE successive federal deficits behind us; with a pitifully inadequate public-works program; with a large and mounting public debt; and with no very good prospect of reducing either normal or emergency federal expenditures there is a persistent and growing feeling that the United States should try to raise more money by taxation. There is a feeling too that more taxation is the way to avoid the kind of inflation that creates more inequalities in the distribution of wealth than it destroys.

To the demand for more tax revenues, the reply is made in some quarters that we have about reached the limit of our taxing capacity. It is not the purpose of this article to argue this proposition, but to summarize a few facts concerning our tax-load and that of Great Britain. Such a summary may shed light on the problem of taxable capacity.

The per-capita tax burden in the United Kingdom is about one-third higher than it is in the United States. Normally, at least, per-capita income and per-capita wealth are greater in the United States. This gives us more of an advantage than the above figure would appear to indicate.

Taxable capacity may depend on how taxes are distributed. Someone has said that a nation is like a peddler and what it can carry depends considerably on the way it arranges its pack. Great Britain is the classic example of a country which relies upon direct taxes—particularly income and inheritance taxes—for a large part of its revenue. Direct taxes of this sort constitute a well arranged pack because they do not deprive the weak taxpayer of the necessities and because they least disturb the consumer's ability to buy. In the following table an attempt is made to compare the distribution of the tax load among the various kinds of taxes in the two countries (the pound in these and following tables is taken to equal $4.92):

SOURCES OF TAX REVENUE FOR ALL GOVERNMENTAL UNITS IN THE UNITED STATES AND UNITED KINGDOM, 1932.

Source	*United States*[1]	*United Kingdom*[2]
Total tax burden	100.00%	100.00%
General property taxes	56.84 "	18.45 "
Income tax	14.06 "	35.15 "
Miscellaneous taxes[3]	7.09 "	2.23 "
Gasoline tax[4]	6.24 "	
Excises	5.47 "	13.95 "
Customs	3.98 "	18.69 "
Motor vehicle taxes	3.94 "	3.13 "
Death duties	2.38 "	8.40 "

[1] Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1933, 1934.

[2] Statistical Abstract of the United Kingdom, 1934. Report of the Ministry of Health, 1933-34.

[3] Includes, in the United States, licenses and permits (exclusive of motor vehicle licenses); in the United Kingdom, stamp and land taxes.

[4] Paid in the United Kingdom as an import duty.

The most striking fact in the table given is the overwhelming importance of the general property tax in the American tax system. It completely overshadows the income tax, which ranks a poor second in importance. Consumption taxes (excises and customs) have a relatively minor place in the tax system as a whole. It should be remembered, however, that these are 1932 statistics. Most of the gains made by the general-sales tax in this country (and the gains have been substantial) have been made in the states during the latter years of the depression.

The income tax occupies somewhat the same position in the British tax system that the property tax does in our own. The inheritance tax has about four times the relative importance in the British system that it has in ours. Property taxation in Great Britain is exceeded in relative importance by the customs and very much exceeded by the customs and excise revenues combined. It should be mentioned, however, that the equivalent of our gasoline tax appears in the British statistics as part of the revenue from customs.

The degree to which the British use direct taxation and the weight of the British tax load are apparent in the comparative income and estate-tax rate schedules in the two countries:

COMPARISON OF EFFECTIVE RATE OF INCOME TAXATION FOR MARRIED MAN WITH NO DEPENDENTS, ALL INCOME EARNED.

Amount of Income	*United States Tax*	*Effective Rate*	*British Tax*	*Effective Rate*
$ 1,000	$ ...	...%	$ 6.97	.69%
5,000	80	1.60 "	637.08	12.74 "
10,000	415	4.15 "	1,663.78	16.63 "
25,000	2,489	9.95 "	6,727.02	26.90 "
50,000	8,869	17.73 "	18,317.32	36.63 "
100,000	30,394	30.39 "	45,448.02	45.44 "
1,000,000	571,394	57.13 "	613,874.00	61.38 "

Personal Exemptions:	*in United States*	*in United Kingdom*
Single person	$1,000	$492
Married person	2,500	738
Normal Rate of Tax	4%	22.5 %
Corporation Tax Rate	13.75 "	22.5 "

COMPARISON OF ESTATE TAX (BEFORE CREDIT) PAYABLE ON SPECIMEN NET ESTATES.

Net Estate Before Exemption	*United States Tax*	*British Tax*
$ 2,500	None	$ 24.50
5,000	None	98.40
50,000	None	1,968.00
100,000	$ 1,500	7,872.00
500,000	59,100	93,480.00
1,000,000	169,100	236,160.00
10,000,000	4,387,600	4,428,000.00
100,000,000	58,386,600	49,200,000.00

Exemption	*United States*	*Great Britain*
	$50,000	$492.00

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It would be unfair, of course, not to call attention to the fact that in America many states impose income and estate taxes in addition to the federal taxes shown in the above tables. On the other hand the income and estate taxes have constituted only a minor source of revenue in most of the states. Top income tax rates range from three to fifteen percent with only six states exceeding six percent. It should be mentioned also that the Federal Government allows a credit against the federal estate tax for a considerable part of the inheritance tax paid the states; that is, it permits a taxpayer to pay federal taxes with state tax receipts. The American estate tax is the only federal death tax, whereas the British have a succession duty (more like our state inheritance taxes) in addition to the others.

It has been pointed out often that while British income and estate tax rates are generally higher than ours it is in the lower and middle brackets that the principal differences appear. It is not until the $60,000 level is reached that the American tax on incomes is half as high as the British and not until the $300,000 level is reached that the estate tax is half as high. If we are to copy the British in a "share-the-wealth" tax program we shall have to revise our idea of where the sharing should begin.

The motorist in this country is frequently told that he is abused with excessive taxes. The average motor-vehicle duty (license fee) in the United States is only $12.70. This must seem ridiculously small to the Englishman who contributes at an average rate of $68.83. The gasoline tax in this country (including the federal tax) runs on the average about 5.46 cents per gallon. The British duty on gasoline is 13.65 cents per gallon.

Whether in England or the United States, if the taxpayer attempts to drown his sorrow he will find the tax collector at his side. But the collector is far less exacting in our own country. The British tax on a barrel of beer (U.S. barrel) is about $14.35, compared with a $5-per-barrel federal tax in the United States and state taxes which range from 31 cents to $4.65 a barrel. The differences of taxation in the case of hard liquor are even greater.

If the taxpayer prefers narcotics to relieve his tax-irritation he will pay eleven to fourteen cents for each package of twenty cigarettes in Great Britain, compared with the six-cent tax on a similar purchase in the United States.

"These comparisons are all very well," says the American taxpayer, "but look at the crushing load of taxes I have to pay upon my home." We have shown that the Englishman who owns property enjoys a relative advantage over the American in similar circumstances. But apparently even here the advantage is relative rather than absolute. According to "A Summary of the British Tax System" recently submitted by a committee of U.S. Treasury experts, the British rates, when reduced to a basis comparable to the property tax in the United States, average as high as $3.18 per $100 of value. This the committee concludes to be somewhat above the average property tax rate in the United States. From this it would appear that, comparatively speaking, even the American property taxpayer "gets off easy." This evidence would seem to remove the last cause for self-sympathy on the part of taxpayers in America.

It is true, of course, that as a nation we have been spending money during the depression very much faster than we have been raising it. Thus while our per-capita taxes as previously stated are a third less than those of Great Britain, our per-capita expenditures, according to the latest figures, are 16 percent greater. It is reassuring to learn however, that we still have a long advantage over Great Britain in the matter of indebtedness. The British per-capita public debt is two and one-half times as great as ours. Total local and national indebtedness in the United Kingdom is greater by two billion dollars than in the United States.

It is said in many quarters that high taxes and the high cost of government brought on the depression. In this respect it is interesting to observe that the British with all their taxes have taken far less of a beating during the last five years than have we.

Few people will support high taxes for their own sake. No one envies the British taxpayers because they have to carry a tax load much greater than our own. But if the question is one of taxable capacity, either the British have gone far beyond their limit or else we have a substantial margin still available to draw upon.

HAROLD M. GROVES.

Winter Prophecy

There'll be a scent: "Tantalizing as
distant musk," you will say; and she,
"Tenuous as the sky's wedge of moon."

And she will stop the car, saying:
"I know what it is: lilacs! Night's
elusive tidings lilac-wafted
in this quiver of dusk!"

And together you will escape the highway's
glare of headlights its screech of brakes and
into the thicket go
toward the stillness of that clustered
heady smell, to find its squanderer

—and, finding,
will stand there, vibrant as the air,
and will not speak, will say no word

until at last you say: "Look, we have found
Spring."

JAMES DALY.

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Will We Stay Out of the Next War?

IV: *The Price of Neutrality*

AN OVERWHELMING majority of the American people are firmly resolved to stay out of the next war—a war that has not yet begun and has not raised any concrete issues and difficulties. They know the penalties of going in; it would seem, therefore, a simple matter for them to express their will. But they have not yet begun to experience the price of staying out. Will enough of them continue to want to keep the peace after the war comes? As Walter Millis pointed out in the first article of this series, there is a question what we as a nation shall want, or shall be induced to want, once hostilities have begun. It is therefore well now, when we can still think about the matter with relatively cool objectivity, to count the cost of neutrality and devise a way, if we can, to induce ourselves to pay it.

The cost to the United States is, fortunately, not so great as it would be to most other nations likely to be involved. The greatest price that any people might have to pay, and one that none is ever likely to pay, is non-resistance to invasion and conquest, or the serious threat of it. I should not like to have the task of persuading Americans not to fight if a hostile army should cross our northern or southern boundary, or should land on the Atlantic or the Pacific Coast. But such a thing is so nearly inconceivable that it may be eliminated from serious calculation. A giant bomber might drop a few explosives on one of our coast cities, but even this, though technically possible, is unlikely, at least unless we should first enter a war on account of other causes. We shall not be induced to make war by aggression against our continental territory.

Another price, however, to which we are peculiarly subject, is the emotional one. We are a romantic people, easily swayed by noble ideals. The very desire for peace and the concomitant anger against those who disturb it is one such emotion. Sympathy for the weak and defenseless is another. Liking for the spirited under-dog is a third; support of good faith, good sportsmanship, the keeping of promises is a fourth. We were once induced to fight Spain on the plea of freeing Cuba. Germany's cynical violation of Belgian neutrality was a powerful motive in reconciling people to the declaration of war in 1917. Propaganda of this kind makes itself, even if there is no powerful interest to exploit it—as there usually is. Atrocity stories sometimes are invented for their effect, but often, alas, they are true. The fact that not long ago an American midshipman was arrested and fined in Berlin for coming to the defense of two women who were being pummelled by a brutal Storm Trooper was as good propaganda in this country for some future war against Germany as if all Germany's enemies had hired the late Ivy Lee to do his worst. When Japan broke her international engagements and struck at China, first in Manchuria and then in Shanghai, there was a considerable movement among American lovers of peace for an official boycott against Japan—a measure that could not have been enforced without leading almost certainly to hostilities. As it was, the "Stimson doctrine" of not recognizing Manchukuo, expressed in righteous notes, widened the rift between the two nations. If Britain had supported us, we probably should have gone farther than this. Today we are all hoping that Ethiopia will teach Mussolini a much-needed lesson. If the proper circumstances should arise, it would not be difficult to imagine our going to the aid, in one way or another, of this nation in remote East Africa. Let a general European war start, and powerful sympathetic currents would at once be set up, as from a great electric generator. It cannot be maintained that any nation ever goes to war purely for noble motives, but on the other hand noble motives are a mighty help to baser ones, and nowhere more so than in the good old U. S. A.

A real price of neutrality is therefore suppressing all feelings of sympathy, justice and righteousness about the behavior of other nations. This sounds more simple than it may be in practice. Those, for instance, who look upon the Soviet Union as the hope of the world might have to sit by quietly while she attempted without aid—even economic aid—to resist a combined attack from imperialist powers. Complete non-intervention means not merely willingness to sit by and watch justice, democracy, or what you will, triumph without our help, but willingness to sit by and watch injustice, fascism or any other great menace, imaginary or real, have its way. You may talk yourself blue in the face against going to war because of its miseries and cruelties, its ultimate ineffectuality, without much effect upon a crowd that is already fighting mad. The way to combat one loyalty is to set another and more vigorous one against it. The mere ideal of neutrality is not stirring enough. There must be some line of action that will provide a substitute for the feelings that lead us to combat.

But this, of course, is only the beginning of the matter. Noble motives comprise the raw material of propaganda, but propaganda is often the work of those who have solid material interests. Without

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supporting the impossible position that economic causes alone make war, it is easy to see that unless there were material interests that might favor a particular conflict, war would be unlikely.

Munitions manufacturers have borne the brunt of blame for reaping material benefits from mass-killing, for stirring up trouble and making money out of it, for selling impartially to national friends and national enemies. They practice a cynical, hard-boiled trade. To take the profit out of the manufacture of arms, ammunition and explosives, whether by national ownership of the industries in question, or by taxes, or by strict regulation of their sales that would clamp down an embargo whenever danger of war approached, has become a popular objective. This might do some good, but it would be far from an insurance of neutrality.

In the first place, as the munitions makers themselves have been quick to point out, it would render weak nations or even revolutionary movements still more defenseless against the strong than they are at present. A nation whose government could afford ample preparation to make instruments of war would suffer little; but what would happen to the Ethiopians or to the revolutionary masses in Cuba or elsewhere who were not favored by other governments? If we are to have a warlike world, there are some advantages in free trade in weapons. General access to firearms certainly had something to do with the rise of democracy, as is witnessed by the clause in our Bill of Rights forbidding the government to deprive the citizen of the right to carry arms. We ought to be pretty sure of a government that is to monopolize armament.—Of course, this contention has a diminished force nowadays when economic and technical factors themselves have made the most powerful arms virtually inaccessible to the downtrodden.

Far more important, however, is the difficulty of drawing the line around munitions. Japan did not have to buy shells, powder and airplanes from us in order to subjugate Manchuria. She did have to buy scrap-iron and cotton, however, and ordered them in large quantities. Without the first she would have been short of materials for steel to make the guns and tanks; without the second she could not have made the powder or the uniforms or the airplane wings. In modern industrial civilization it is almost completely true that anything that is useful in peace is also useful for war. Who can tell whether an airplane or a ship or a motor truck—or even a taxicab, as was illustrated at the Battle of the Marne—may not serve military purposes? How are we to differentiate between the bale of cotton destined for a gingham dress and that which will make a khaki suit or a charge of nitro-cellulose? Can we distinguish the bushel of wheat for the army commissary from that for the workers' bread? And suppose the worker is in a munitions plant? There is here a simple proportion: as the difference between the soldier and the civilian, so is the difference between contraband and non-contraband. In both cases the possibility of drawing a distinction has almost vanished.

To nationalize the manufacture of munitions in any realistic sense we should have to nationalize the steel industry, the automobile industry, the shipbuilding industry, the airplane industry, the chemical industry, the lumber industry—but why continue? It is true, of course, that the cotton share-cropper or the wheat grower does not pay war propagandists or lobbyists for greater armament. In this sense it might somewhat allay the danger of war if only the larger and concentrated industries directly concerned were nationalized. But one must recognize that such material interests as may be advanced by selling to belligerents are not confined to a narrow circle of wicked merchants of death.

The bearing of this conclusion becomes apparent after a major war has begun, rather than in advance. Although most manufacturers, traders and farmers do not consciously do anything calculated to stir up international trouble, they stand in a position to profit when it comes. Once the war export business has grown to considerable dimensions, the fat is in the fire. Ambassador Page's famous cablegram to President Wilson,[1] just before our declaration of war against Germany, stated an obvious fact, and a fact that would have had its inexorable consequences if we had not promptly joined the Allies. It is not necessary to prove that this cablegram actually entered the President's calculations. Perhaps it did not. But we do know that prominent bankers and industrialists were conscious of the truth it expressed. Their influence must have been felt in thousands of channels, now untraceable. The Allies' credit was near exhaustion. Their purchases in this country could not have continued without loans from our government. If these purchases had not continued, our economy, warped to supply the war demands, would have collapsed. The "international bankers" would have suffered, but no more than all the important industrialists and not so much as the farmers and industrial workers. As a matter of fact, the country did not pay this price, regardless of what motives led the President to call for war. Would it have consented to pay the price if the President had made a contrary decision? Perhaps so, but no one can deny that the pressure to salvage our own bread and butter by joining the Allies would have become far greater even than it was early in the fateful April of 1917. For we should have begun to experience the price of neutrality instead of merely foreseeing it.

Realization of this situation supplies the strongest possible argument for neutrality legislation of the

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[1] The cablegram referred to was sent by Ambassador Page from London to President Wilson on March 5, 1917. It predicted a crisis in the United States if the Allies were unable to meet their payments on a $400,000,000 loan made through Morgan's and added that "it is not improbable that the only way of maintaining our present preëminent trade position and averting a panic is by declaring war on Germany."

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sort now proposed in Congress. If we give up the old conception of "freedom of the seas" and do not try to protect our ships or the goods they may bear to the belligerents, if we do not attempt to guard the interests or lives of our citizens in the war zones, and if, above all, we prevent the growth of war trade with the belligerents by embargoing all loans and all shipments of contraband to them, most of the economic complications that entangled us in the last war will not be given a chance to weave their fatal web. It is easy to admit the potency of these measures of neutrality. But, here again, it is not so easy to appreciate their cost before the measures are actually applied.

Certainly this cost would be greater than is commonly understood. Many think of it in terms merely of preventing the growth of an abnormal war traffic, while continuing to enjoy a normal foreign trade. It is assumed that all we should have to do would be to prevent certain belligerents from buying a limited class of products known as munitions, or a somewhat larger but still negligible group known as contraband, but otherwise to go on our peaceful and comfortable way. This might be true in the case of an isolated duel between two contestants, at least one of which was economically unimportant. But that is not the kind of war that it is difficult to keep away from, and it is not the kind against which the neutrality bills are designed to guard us. A general European or Asiatic war, or indeed, a general world war, is the danger that we fear. In such a war, our exports to the belligerents would comprise the greater part of our sales abroad. Any remaining neutrals would be engaged principally in supplying the warring nations; consequently American shipments to neutrals would likewise be subject to the surveillance of whatever navy controlled the seas. There would be few if any nations to which the embargo would not have to be applied. And, if it were to be effective for its purpose, it would have to extend to everything that the belligerents might denominate as contraband. These lists would undoubtedly include most of our chief items of export—raw cotton, automobiles and parts, gasoline, wheat and flour, copper, lard, lubricating oil, and possibly a large share of cotton manufacture as well. Tobacco might escape, or agricultural machinery. But the difference between complete stoppage of exports to everyone and the cutting off of dangerous exports to belligerents would be so small that we might as well say at once that the economic price of neutrality amounts to the abandonment of foreign trade. It means, not merely foregoing the *additional* profits that might come as the result of selling war supplies, but losing by one self-delivered blow the normal peace-time trade on which we are accustomed to depend.

But this, it may be answered, is even in normal times only about 10 percent of our total business, and now it has shrunk to even less. The matter can hardly be dismissed so airily. In 1934 Americans sold goods abroad valued at $2,133,000,000. Interest and dividends on investments abroad amounted to $453,000,000. From miscellaneous trade and service transactions those who provided them got $231,000,000. These are not inconsiderable amounts to industries and occupations going at something less than full speed, many of which make little profit, and few of which are able to give anywhere near enough employment to those looking for work.

Besides, the 10 percent would not be sliced evenly off all of us, at least for some time. Even the most hardy advocates of self-containment have never had the courage to propose that we attempt the necessary internal readjustments in a brief period. Consider the South and the cotton growers, for instance. We export at least half of the cotton we grow. America has already seen the difficulties that arise when we restrict cotton production by a small percentage. We have seen how it turned people off the land, how it threw share-croppers on relief. Suppose that we suddenly deprived the South of a market for half its cotton. (In 1933, 4,523,000,000 pounds were shipped abroad, valued at $398,000,000. In 1929 the value of our exports of raw cotton was $771,000,000.) We should soon have a war within our own borders. The South would secede again, for the purpose of being permitted to sell its chief product and so to keep from mass starvation. Add tobacco exports—439,000,000 pounds, worth $83,000,000 even in 1933. Add gasoline (much of which comes from the South)—26,000,000 barrels, for $58,000,000.

But why suppose such a thing? For the Southern congressmen, who would most certainly vote solidly against such a proposal the moment they understood what it meant, would be joined by congressmen from the wheat belt and the corn belt (even with the loss of a great part of our food market abroad, we still in 1933 exported wheat worth $19,000,000 and lard worth $34,000,000). These would be aided by the oil congressmen, the automobile congressmen, the typewriter congressmen. Congress would simply decline to legalize the embargo, or, if it did pass the law, would repeal it as soon as the price began to be paid. If, by some miracle, the law were passed and not repealed, every port on both oceans, every station and road on both land borders, would develop a smuggling trade that would put the prohibition bootleggers to shame. It would take twenty coast guards the size of ours, plus ten navies, to make even a pretense of enforcing it.

If measures of this sort were to have the slightest chance, they would have to be developed much further. Why, it would be argued, should a policy adopted in the national interest place such a heavy burden on particular sections of the population? And argued so with justice. If we were all equally to pay the price of economic neutrality, there might be some adequate reply. Suppose the government undertook to buy from each industry the goods that, without the embargo, it might have exported. A rough test might be devised on the basis of exports

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for the past year, or past three years. And then suppose the cost were distributed by taxation. If we were all taxed enough to yield some $2,500,000,000 more than we now do to the Federal Government, it could pay the price. And we should all be bearing our share of the cost. If we want neutrality that badly, if we are willing to pay in dollars and cents, there is a chance that we may neutralize the economic causes that otherwise might lead us to join a world war. That would translate into concrete terms the lost 10 percent of our business, about which the economic isolationists talk so airily.

We must not, of course, overlook the imports side of the picture. Some of us want French wines. Nearly all of us like our coffee, tea and sugar. Tin, manganese and other minerals are important to industry. Unless we could devise a way of paying for these and hundreds of other imported products, a general stoppage of foreign trade would involve certain genuine sacrifices.

Economic determinism is not a mechanical deus ex machina; but material interests are a powerful influence on human motives. It is not well to be defeatist on the neutrality issue, but it is necessary to point out that if we really want neutrality we ought to care enough about it to investigate the obstacles and prepare soberly to overcome them. It seems unlikely to me that the American people will pay the price, at least under the existing economic regime. If we had given up an unplanned profit system and were engaged in building a collectivist order, the chances would be quite different. For then the ultimate ruin of war would have its proper weight in the scales against the immediate gain. Indeed, the immediate gain might readily disappear, for domestic demand would presumably eat into unsalable surpluses. We should not be eager to export more than enough to pay for the things we really needed from abroad. Burdens, if there were any, could be more easily equalized. Above all, we should have a loyalty that would be an emotional counter to the war madness. Peace would be, not merely the absence of war, but the chance to create, undisturbed from abroad, a worthy human society.

Finally, it is well to remind ourselves that the problem of avoiding war is not merely one of maintaining a virtuous isolation from hostilities that wicked foreigners may cause. For any new world war the United States will bear its full burden of responsibility, even if we are not ourselves in on its beginning. We may possibly fight for the chance to trade and invest in Asia. We are guilty of much of the present trouble in Europe—our part in the last war and its settlement, our tariffs, our loans, our attempt to collect uncollectible war debts, our boom and depression, were all powerful contributons, for instance, to the desperation that produced fascism in Germany. If there is to be real insurance against war, we must not confine our attention to ways of staying out. We must learn, along with other peoples, how to avoid provoking it. We must help the rest of the human race to want peace.

GEORGE SOULE.

The Pulse of the Nation

THE Honorable Charles M. Thwack, Secretary of the Department of Political Planning, shifted his solid bulk on the seat he occupied in his private car and pulled out his handkerchief. It was summer, the flat brazen heat of July, and outside the rushing window the sun beat down on the sandy hills of Carolina. The Secretary mopped his brow, tapping his handkerchief lightly, and remarked that it was a pretty hot day.

"You said it, Charley," replied one of his companions. "It must be a hundred at least."

"This is hotter than it gets in Washington," said another.

"It never gets hotter than it gets in Washington," said a third.

The private car was crowded with the Secretary's traveling companions. The Secretary was on a very important mission and it was his opinion, not entirely original, that the more persons who went on a mission the more important it became.

He nodded assent to the various remarks that had been made, being by nature an agreeable man, and continued mopping his brow. His head was bald, polished like the cap of a young girl's knee, and his eyes were small and shrewd. He picked up his lemonade, for he never drank hard liquor, and sipped thoughtfully. Before him, like a vast photomontage covering the bright sandy landscape, came all the hundreds of newspaper clippings he had seen during the past few weeks. SECRETARY THWACK TO TOUR AMERICA . . . PRESIDENT'S ADVISOR TO REPORT ON NATION'S SENTIMENT . . . THWACK'S TOUR TO COVER MANY STATES . . . SECRETARY TO FEEL PULSE OF NATION.

The Secretary took another swallow of lemonade. He was not his usual hearty, jocular self. He felt very serious. His seriousness infected the others. They whispered to each other.

"Charley's serious," one of them said.

"Yes," said another. "He sometimes gets like that. You can't ever tell when he's going to get serious. You wouldn't think it, watching him at the Dukes of the Dromedary convention, but he's a very serious man."

"He's serious, all right," another said. "But it

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doesn't last long. He'll snap out of it. He's like a rubber ball. Up one minute and down the next."

"You can't bounce him, though," the speaker gave a barely perceptible wink. "He doesn't take to bouncing."

"Not Charley."

They stopped whispering and looked at the Secretary. He was still serious. His face bore the same expression as in the photographs taken before the Vatican after he had been to see the Pope. His companions wished he would stop being serious. They felt that he had nothing to be serious about. All the people they had interviewed had said the same thing. The sentiment in their part of the country was overwhelmingly in favor of the President. What more could Charley want? He ought to snap out of it. He was holding up the poker game. All during the trip the Secretary had been a heavy winner and they wanted revenge. There was not much time left. They were due in Washington that night.

"Men."

The Secretary spoke the word as though it were part observation and part command. His voice was the voice of a man used to being obeyed. His companions responded to it like the second team running to the bark of the coach.

"This is a great country, men. A great country."

The Secretary's companions were taken aback. They looked at each other in amazement. They knew he had his serious moments, like the time the news leaked out that he was clipping all the President's signatures from the memoranda that came to his office and sending them to his friends—a bit of generosity that caused a furious outburst from the country's autograph collectors—but they had never known him to speak so philosophically before. Seriousness and philosophy were two different things. They did not know exactly how to proceed. One, however, finally ventured into the unknown.

"You're right, Charley. You're one hundred percent right. This is a great country."

The others watched the Secretary's face attentively. Its expression altered until it looked as it did in the newsreels taken when he was made an honorary LL.D. at Yorkville University. It was still serious, but about his mouth there played the faint beginning of a smile. His companions felt relieved.

"It's the greatest country in the world," one of them said. "Think of it. Think of this vast and mighty land of ours—stretching from Maine to California, from the stormy Atlantic to the peaceful Pacific, from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico. No other country in the world was founded on such enduring principles—principles so dear to the hearts of our forefathers—principles of democracy and justice—"

The speaker was a man famous for his oratory, one who could always be depended upon to bring a rally cheering to its feet, but the Secretary was in no mood for oratory. He nodded and took another swallow of lemonade. He stopped the oratory.

"Men," he said, "we have a great responsibility. I never realized what a great responsibility we have until I made this trip. This great nation of ours has placed itself in our hands—in the hands of our Chief—the man whose destinies are tied up with our own—"

He paused, visibly gripped with emotion. Save for the clacking of wheels, and the tinkling of ice in glasses as the train rounded a curve, there was silence. The Secretary's eyebrows gathered in a frown. The photographers had never caught him with such an expression. It was even more serious than it was after he had been to see the Pope.

"We have a job to do," he said. "It's a big job. We've got to see that this great nation of ours doesn't get back into the hands of the Republicans."

There was another pause. The men in the car waited for him to continue, but he had apparently concluded. He turned his eyes from them and looked from the window. His friends were baffled by his mood. Some of them had known him many years, but they had never seen him in a mood like this. He was generally the very soul of optimism. Not once, since the 1932 election, did he seem to think that the Republicans had even the ghost of a chance. He had said so many times.

"They haven't a chance, Charley," one of them assured him, using his very words. "They haven't a ghost of a chance."

"They're dead," said another. "They're dead and don't know it."

"1936 is in the bag, Charley. We can't miss."

"It'll be a landslide. The Republicans won't carry seven states."

The Secretary turned from the bright glare of sun that lay upon the hills. His jaw was set and little drops of perspiration shone on his bald head.

"Something happened on this trip," he said. "Something I wanted to avoid. I wanted to go back to Washington and tell the Chief that nowhere, in all the territory we covered, did we find a single man who wasn't with him—who wasn't ready to support him one hundred percent. I wanted to go back to him and say, 'Chief, the country is behind you. I didn't talk to a single man who wasn't a one-hundred-percent supporter of the administration. Chief, the country is yours.' That's what I wanted to say to him. You know how the Chief is. He likes to feel that the people are behind him. It gives him confidence. The more people are behind him, the more confident he is. If he knows that the people are one hundred percent behind him, he will be one hundred percent confident." He paused again, a look of sadness coming across his face. "If only that incident in Kansas——"

The faces about him were all as serious as his. At last his friends understood what was on his mind.

There had been some slight confusion about train schedules, for which the railroad company had sent an immediate and profuse telegram of apology,

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and the Secretary's train had been detained for a short while in a small Kansas town. A crowd gathered; the Secretary was prevailed upon to speak.

Up to that time he had steadily refused to make a speech, or even to enter into conversation, with any of the people who gathered at their every stopping-place. He contented himself with shaking hands. And the few persons the Secretary *had* conferred with, throughout his tour, were all Democrats. Only Democrats, he said, could give him the kind of information he wanted. Only they could tell him the exact sentiment of voters in their part of the country. Once he discovered that he was talking to a Farmer-Laborite and concluded the interview immediately. Such people detected a feverish condition in the country when, obviously, no fever was there. They were alarmists and this was no time to be alarmed. One had to keep a cool Democratic head on one's shoulders. He was after an accurate report on the pulse of the nation and he wanted only a Democratic count.

But in this little Kansas town, with the crowd jamming the station and spilling out over the tracks, there were so many calls for a speech that finally he decided to say a few words. He went out on the rear platform and after the crowd stopped cheering he began to speak. He said he was happy to be in Kansas, one of the great commonwealths of the nation, and that he was equally happy to report that he had found the country one-hundred-percent behind the President. At that moment a man who was standing not far from the platform cupped his hands and shouted, as loud as he could:

"Nuts!"

The Secretary was astonished. In all the miles he had traveled nothing like this had ever happened. He looked down at the man. He was a thin man, dressed in a pair of overalls and an old felt hat.

"I personally bring the greetings of our President to you," the Secretary continued, trying to ignore the thin man in overalls. "He has instructed me to say that he thinks of you, not as mere voters, but as warm personal friends."

"Nuts!" The thin man shouted again. "Nuts!"

He had a sharp, rasping voice and many of the people turned to look at him. The Secretary's face reddened. He could not keep his eyes from his heckler. "I know—" he went on, "I know that you will be glad to know that the President is working on a—on a plan—at this very moment—on a plan that will bring more security and prosperity to the people of Kansas."

"So what," said the thin man. "Nuts!"

The Secretary said a few more words, but the fire and spirit, the buoyant self-confidence, had gone from his voice. Two men, obviously constables, led the thin man in overalls away. There were gratifying cheers when the Secretary concluded, but he was bitter that this one occasion, this one solitary man, should mar an otherwise perfect trip. And it was obvious to his companions, sitting in the private car, that his bitterness had not left him. One of them reached forward and touched his knee. He spoke with concern.

"Don't worry about that, Charley. You've been in politics long enough to know that there are some people who are never satisfied—no matter how much you try to help them."

"Sure, Charley. That's life. It takes all kinds of people to make a world. You can't let a thing like that get you down."

"I'm not thinking about myself," the Secretary said. "I'm thinking about the Chief. I don't want to let him down. If I could have gone back and told him that every voter I saw was one-hundred-percent for him—"

"But you can, Charley. That's just the point. You can."

The Secretary looked at the speaker.

"What do you mean?"

"That man wasn't a voter, Charley. You could tell he wasn't a voter just by looking at him. He doesn't count."

"Do you really think so?"

"Absolutely, Charley. There can't be any doubt about it. I've been in politics thirty years and if there's one thing I know, it's a voter. I can tell a voter a mile off. If that guy was a voter, I'm Ogden Mills."

"That's right, Charley. He was no voter."

"Not a chance in the world."

The Secretary studied their faces. Each reflected utter truth and sincerity. The Secretary knew he could depend upon them to tell the truth. They were men of honor and integrity and independent wills; not mere yes-men in search of reward. He felt warm and friendly toward them. They had taken a great load off his mind.

He thought of his coming interview with the Chief. He could see the two of them, alone in the White House study where the sailing prints were, discussing his trip.

"The country's behind you, Chief," he would say. "One hundred percent. It's the same everywhere. I covered five thousand miles on this trip and I didn't talk to a single voter—not one—who wasn't for you. There was one man, out in Kansas, who wasn't for you exactly one hundred percent. But he's not a voter. I've never seen anything like it, Chief. It's wonderful. We've got an organization that can't be beat. You're in."

And he could see the Chief's fine, handsome face, his broad, engaging smile, he could feel the warm and thankful pressure of his hand.

"Thank you, Charley," the Chief would say. "That's just what I wanted to hear. I knew I could depend on you."

The Secretary grinned and slapped the backs of his companions. He was himself again. His face looked the way it looked in the photographs taken on election day. He rubbed his hands and finished his drink and rang the bell for the porter.

"Herman," he said, "deal the cards."

HAMILTON BASSO.

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The Brown International

ONE OF the least-publicized activities of the Hitler government in Germany is the extension of Nazi parties into every country in Europe. This movement goes far beyond the usual propaganda methods of peaceful penetration. Pro-German sentiment is organized into active political parties which often wield tremendous influence. No matter where or when an election is held throughout the whole of Europe, it is always pertinent to ask, "How many votes for Hitler?"

The Nazi parties outside the borders of Germany are of two main types. The first consists of actual Germans and makes strong sentimental appeals based on hereditary ties with the Fatherland. The other type of party makes an appeal to kindred races, such as the Dutch, Flemish and Scandinavian, who may be presumed to be especially susceptible to the Nazi tenets of "Nordic" supremacy. Supporting these two main types of political party, there is the whole general anti-Semitic feeling in Europe. These several movements, which are smart enough to make their appeal to sentiment and prejudice rather than to logic and reason, form a veritable Brown International. This is a much more real factor in present-day Europe than any bogey of a Communist International ever was. Let us consider these Nazi parties in the countries surrounding Germany.

Beginning our analysis of the Brown International with its components of German race, we find the strongest of these in Czechoslovakia. The spectacular start just made by the camouflaged Nazi Party of Bohemia, Sudetendeutsche Heimatfront (SHF)—which accomplished the extraordinary performance of polling, with its first appeal to the electorate, the highest number of votes on record in the country—conveys a striking idea of the tremendous disruptive force exerted by the Reich on its neighbors.

There are 3,500,000 Germans living in Czechoslovakia, out of a total population of 15,000,000. Two-thirds of these 3,500,000 Germans—the large majority of whom are settled in the frontier district of the Sudetic Mountains—profess the Nazi faith. If the fact was dubious for some time, it has now been established beyond discussion, when the SHF, at the general elections held on May 19, obtained nearly 70 percent of German votes and 44 seats out of 66 won by the German minority, asserting itself at the same time as the strongest party existing in the republic of Czechoslovakia.

The SHF is a prototype of the disguised Hitler agency abroad. A neutral, innocent name with a strong sentimental appeal. Frequent and emphatic protestations of loyalty towards the State, while in fact every leading figure in the party is bound by a personal oath of allegiance to Hitler. Officially they disclaim anti-Semitism, but a very efficient whispering campaign enforces Jew-baiting on every party member. For example: A few weeks ago, a Jewish surgeon, Dr. Josef Fach, who had been engaged for seven and a half years at the surgery of the German University at Prague, was driven to suicide by the organized boycott practised against him by his colleagues, all members of the SHF. The SHF, founded by Konrad Henlein after the genuine Nazi Party had been declared illegal for having attempted to undermine the integrity of the State, took over from the suspended party not only the press, voters and leading *cadres,* but every single Nazi "idea" and connections with Berlin.

In Poland, as in Czechoslovakia and in many other countries, the various associations previously formed by the German minority underwent last year, under the pressure, control and active cooperation of Berlin, a thorough reorganization intended to allow the Nazi foreign department a stricter supervision. There is now a Landesgruppe in Warsaw, from which depend district and local sections throughout the country. The Landesgruppe, like an actual government, is divided into eight departments: (1) organization and propaganda; (2) staff bureau; (3) education and culture; (4) the press; (5) economic department; (6) administrative section; (7) social relief; (8) disciplinary and inquiries bureau, this being the branch office of the German secret police (Gestapo). This is the central party organization which controls two other large bodies assembling, under the usual noncommital names, all activist elements of the German minority: the Deutsche Vereinigung, founded in 1934, for the purpose of uniting the 400,000 Germans of Posen and Pomerania. This union, under the chairmanship of Herr von Witzleben, is conservative, feudal, agrarian, while its pendant Jungdeutsche Partei makes a more Socialist appeal to the working and middle classes, with all the demagogic slogans the Nazis have at their disposal when haranguing the people.

In Lithuania, the clearly separatist activities of the Memel Nazis have just been dragged into the limelight of a mass trial before the Kaunas court-martial. Two rival parties, the Sozialistische Volksgemeinschaft, headed by Dr. Neumann, and the Christlich-Soziale Arbeitsgemeinschaft (observe those names!) under the direction of Pastor von Sass, both equipped with Storm Troops and largely subsidized by Berlin, prepared the annexation of the Memel district to Germany, until both were suspended by the Lithuanians.

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Switzerland is infested by a fantastic variety of Nazi parties, which it would be impossible fully to enumerate. Here are the most important: National Front, ruled by Dr. Henne, a Schaffhausen industrialist; the Bund National-Sozialistischer Eidgenossen, which actually enrolled its partisans living in the Reich into Storm Troops; the Volksbund, of Major Leonhardt; the Bund Neue Schweiz, founded by Pastor Joss; the Schweizer Heimatwehr; the Eidgenössische Front, etc., etc. Some of these movements are specifically Helvetian in their appeal, while others indulge in the most servile imitation of Germany, which, by the way, possesses its own organization in Switzerland.

Skipping little Luxemburg where we might find more Nazis than inhabitants (there is a special Landesführer: Schoeller), we come to Nazi organizations of kindred race: Dutch, Flemish, Scandinavian. Recent elections in Holland produced a no less stirring effect than in Bohemia, as the Mussert Party, also with its first appeal to the electorate, obtained 267,440 votes (8 percent) ranking now with 39 seats in the fifth place among Dutch parties. Mussert, an ex-government official, founded his Nazi movement, the NSB, as early as 1931. After having merely vegetated for a long time, it rapidly increased, after Hitler's advent, to a membership of 40,000. The party has a "Brown House" at Utrecht and is reported already to exert a strong indirect influence upon the government. Count Oberndorff, "foreign minister" in the Mussert party, is known to possess excellent connections with leading German circles. Other Nazi movements of minor importance are the General Union of Dutch Fascists and the DINASOS (cf. below), while the Reich runs its own Nazi Party in Holland.

In Belgium, Nazidom is chiefly represented by the so-called DINASOS, a union of Flemish separatists aiming at a "Big Holland" under Nazi rule, founded in 1931 by Van Severen. They wear brown shirts, while headquarters are termed "Green Houses." A similar group are the Flemish Frontists.

Scandinavia is dotted with Nazi movements. Sweeden boasts three overtly National-Socialist parties, while at least two other groups espouse the main stock of Hitler's ideas. The Lindholm-Nazis (NSAP) are regarded as the left-wing sort, while Colonel Ekstroem's National-Socialist Bloc—in which Count Eric von Rosen, Goering's brother-in-law, plays the chief part—represents the right-wing Nazis, and the oldest group of Swedish Hitlerites, the SNSP, steers a middle course.

Norway possesses no less than four Nazi parties, the strongest of which is Major Quisling's Nesjonal Samling, simply a bad copy of Hitlerism, while the Fedrelandslaget is trying to be more genuinely Norvegian and a National Socialist Workers' Party, now divided into two rival factions, attempts to do the running with the whole repertoire of Goebbels' "left" slogans intended to lure the diffident and reluctant working classes.

Denmark, actively worked by both German and Danish Nazis, is in a particularly difficult position, as the first, with the complicity of the second, is openly promoting separatism in Schleswig, once a German province. The Danish Nazis (Wilfred Petersen Party) recently committed serious terrorist offenses, especially by stopping trains to kidnap adversaries traveling by them, while another group, J.A.K., frequently indulges in smashing up meetings of political opponents.

All of these Nazi parties created around Germany are more or less dependent on and subsidized by the German organizations for foreign propaganda. The frequent changes in the names and structure of these parties, which spring up like mushrooms and often disappear as rapidly, with frequent schisms and fusions, may render more difficult, but they will hardly obscure, the clear comprehension of their role. This virtually constituted Brown International, while equally intended to satisfy the local appetites for power, aims chiefly at building up, in the very heart of Europe, a gigantic Pan-German Empire under Nazi rule. If this International, for the time being, is chiefly engaged in organizing a worldwide Jew-baiting campaign and lending the German police efficient help in the kidnaping or murdering of anti-Nazi emigrants, it may safely be expected to become a much more serious factor in the event of a new war. Then, many a national army—in Czechoslovakia, Belgium, Denmark or elsewhere—will be surprised to find armed gangs, formed by the German minorities or their Nazi allies, rising in their rear or even in the very rank and file. The Brown International will prove, some day, to be a much more efficient reality at the disposal of Berlin than the Red could ever become for the sake of Moscow.

JOACHIM JOESTEN.

Stockholm, Sweden.

Gulf of St. Lawrence

Birds on their bevel wings, but what escape?
Green sea, grey foam upon the granite rocks;
The sea-gull's jew-beak, and the sea-seal's nape,
The harbor's surf-stink, the unceasing shocks
On the sea-breakers of the wind-split waves:
What is the answer to this evening's pause?
We who have come from Asia, through the west,
To this brief vigil that our sense allows,
Recall our patience, but forget our quest,
Remark how surely the slow evening laves
Contorted rocks into a bed of moss.
But caught ourselves in sea-wind, in a caul
That will not break for what this wind might cause,
Feel salt brine stinging on a blistered hand,
Watch sea-spray blowing as the sea-waves fall,
And smell dead mollusks on the undrenched sand.

JOHN VINCENT HEALY.

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Washington Notes

The Coughlin Balloon Develops a Leak—Congress Feels Bullish—New Deal Boy Makes Good

THE ADMINISTRATION leaders appear to have executed an important coup. By promising a vote on the bonus in January, early in the next session of Congress, they have purchased the support of the bonus advocates for the Roosevelt tax program. If the bonus group abides by this bargain, it presumably means that the tax bill will be passed without great difficulty, and that adjournment is not far away. The only comforting aspect of this deal is that indirectly it is likely to finish Father Coughlin.

The process of letting the air out of Father Coughlin is already well advanced. Three weeks ago, the proposal nearest his heart, the creation of a United States bank, was rudely hustled to the Senate floor and slaughtered. It would never have been brought to a vote if the administration had not been sure of defeating it. It was a deliberate attempt to humiliate Father Coughlin, and to show how little power he had left. Part of the bargain between the administration leaders and the bonus group, it now appears, is that the second of Father Coughlin's pet measures, the revised edition of the Frazier-Lemke farm-mortgage bill, is to be postponed along with the bonus until next year's session. But while a definite promise of action has been given in the case of the bonus, no such promise seems to have been made in the case of the Frazier-Lemke bill. The Washington headquarters of the National Union for Social Justice has recently and unexpectedly closed its doors. At one time last winter, half a dozen Senators and perhaps fifty Representatives were Father Coughlin's bondslaves, spending their week-ends in trips to Detroit to make obeisance before the Shrine of the Little Flower. Father Coughlin now seems to have been rubbed out by a parliamentary gang. He has had the Roosevelt finger put upon him.

However, at the moment, the left-wing bloc in Congress is the loser by his defeat. The left-wingers will now have to fight the administration's tax program alone, without help from the bonus and inflationist forces. There are a number of Senators who will fight against the tax bill, but the full weight of the inflationists and bonus advocates will be lacking. Senator La Follette, who commands the left-wing campaign, is a remarkably resourceful strategist, and can be counted on to make every possible effort to remold the tax bill into a measure that will yield the revenues necessary to provide immediate and adequate security for the unemployed—something the administration's social-security bill makes no pretence of doing—but the odds against his success have become heavy.

Perhaps the chief obstacle to left-wing measures of all kinds is the steady rise of the stock market. Congress is now composed, on the whole, of men from the lower-middle class. Especially in the case of the House members, few of them derive any considerable part of their income from dividends. If it were not for their government salaries, a generous number of them would be on relief. Yet these Representatives follow the movement of stock prices with awe. They regard the stock ticker as the final oracle on the future of human affairs. Because the market has recently advanced, the feeling of urgency that they once had about reform measures has evaporated. The fractional gains that have been recorded in public utility shares are unquestionably part of the reason for the insouciance of the House in opposing the death-sentence clause.

The effect of the stock market rise has been even more marked upon the morale of administration officials. No responsible official whom I know believes that an increase in the price of stocks, or even Major L.L.B. Angas's long-heralded American boom, will result in sufficient business activity to absorb all the unemployed. Nor do they think that a boom, if it comes, will be anything but temporary. But obviously an increase in business activity would reëmploy a certain number of workers, would reduce the cost of relief, would increase the yield of taxes. Lately many important administration officials have been holding silent guessing contests with themselves. Is the relief program too elaborate? How far will increased industrial wages solve the farm problem? After all, are increased taxes needed at the present time? Self-questioning of this sort is not conducive to the carrying out of bold, sweeping reforms.

Last week's by-election in Rhode Island is serving as a corrective to these pleasant stock-market fantasies. I am convinced that the administration's official explanation that the defeat was caused by a split in the local organization is insufficient. There was a split, but it does not account for a change of 34,000 votes. Nor does the resentment of textile mill owners against the cotton processing tax account for it. The Democratic candidate was beaten by the unemployed, and by those who, although they have jobs, are receiving starvation wages. He was beaten by those who judge the condition of the country by the gnawing in their bellies, rather than by the averages of fifty selected industrials.

Throughout the delays and changes in the $4,880,000,000 relief program, one new agency, the Rural Electrification Administration, is making steady, and comparatively rapid, progress. Mr. Morris L. Cooke, the administrator, has obtained an offer from a committee representing the chief public utility systems to undertake the immediate extension of electric service to 250,000 farms. This represents about a third of the farm homes now without electricity, for which service is economically feasible. When it is appreciated that for years the utilities have protested that they could not make extensions of service in rural areas, that to erect another pole or string an additional mile of wire would mean instant bankruptcy, the magnitude of Mr. Cooke's achievement is apparent. The offer, moreover, was drafted before the Senate's utility investigation began, and does not represent a suspicious burst of public spiritedness on the utilities' part. The committee's offer, if accepted, would exhaust the $100,000,000 so far set aside for the R.E.A. Mr. Cooke has announced, however, that no money will be handed out until the individual companies submit estimates of costs of construction and proposed rates to consumers, and that, in any case, funds will be reserved for applications from coöperatives, county power associations and municipalities desiring to serve surrounding rural areas.

Washington. T. R. B.

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Other People's Money

Nemesis on the March—Who Will Reorganize the Missouri Pacific?—Van Sweringens, Morgans and the R.F.C.

NEMESIS, it seems, is stalking the reorganizers. Over that fair and fertile countryside where thrifty promoters and their sly lawyers make golden apples grow on the rotting boughs of reorganized railroads, two shadows fall. They are thin shadows, but they grow darker as the summer days go by. One is the shadow of that very curious person Max Lowenthal. The other is the shadow of that equally quizzical individual W. O. Douglas. Both are lawyers. Both have seen the Wall Street racket from the inside. One of them—Lowenthal—armed with the credentials of Senator Wheeler's Committee on Interstate Commerce, is preparing his investigation of railroad reorganizations. The other—Douglas—armed with the warrants and authority of the Securities Exchange Commission, has had one reorganization case after another on the grill. By the time the leaves begin to fall, Max Lowenthal will probably be ready to begin asking some questions of the reorganizers. By that time Douglas will have compiled an appalling and damning dossier for his superiors on the S.E.C.

But meanwhile, the gentlemen who piloted various railroads into bankruptcy and disaster stand outside the Reconstruction Finance Corporation with their hats in their hands and beg Uncle Sam to give them more millions.

One excellent case is the Missouri Pacific, Wall Street symbol, MOP. That road went into bankruptcy in March, 1933. Before that, of course, the Van Sweringen boys, roving the plains in search of new properties to grab, had got hold of the MOP through their holding company—the Alleghany Corporation. Despite their wizardry, the road found itself on the rocks in 1931. Mr. Hoover having set up the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to save the nation by the famous trickle theory, the Van boys fell in with the door when Mr. Eugene Meyer opened the R.F.C. for business. Before they were through they got $23,000,000 from the R.F.C. to perpetuate their hold on that road. One reason for the promoter's existence has always been that he was able to put up or find the money for the enterprises he grabbed. Now these ingenious Cleveland promoters couldn't put up or find any more money. So they proposed that Uncle Sam should put it up, but that they should go on holding fast to the enterprise just the same.

In spite of the $23,000,000 from the R.F.C. the Missouri Pacific went into bankruptcy in March, 1933. It was another one of those things. The court named the president of the road, a Van employee, trustee and the railroad's counsel, another Van employee, attorney for the trustee. Thereafter under the protection of bankruptcy proceedings the Vans have continued to run the road. But now they are trying to reorganize it. And a plan of reorganization has been submitted by Mr. O. P. Van Sweringen to the Interstate Commerce Commission. Indeed various railroad reorganizers are hurrying with their plans. Those ominous shadows—Lowenthal and Douglas—get painfully threatening. When Lowenthal has turned his flashlight on some of the work of the reorganizers, their chances of further utility may be seriously diluted. Hence time becomes the very essence of their machinations.

The Van Sweringen plan to revive the road—which is having its second bankruptcy in eighteen years—is a delightful concoction. The Vans haven't a nickel in that railroad. Their holding company, the Alleghany Corporation, holds a controlling interest in the stock of the MOP. The Vans dominate the Alleghany Corporation, but the money for that concern was supplied by a multitude of investors who were told lovely tales about the Van Sweringens in the late nineteen-twenties. However, the Van Sweringens through some of their holding companies borrowed $48,000,000 from the Morgan firm. And that firm holds, among other things, Alleghany shares as collateral for the loan. These shares control MOP. The Morgan firm therefore has the chief interest in this business. It holds the whip hand. There is good reason to believe that in the reorganization, the voice is the voice of O.P., but the hand is the hand of J.P.

To save the common stock of the MOP for the Alleghany is to save the stock of the Morgans and the Vans. But it is impossible to save stockholders without sacrificing bondholders. So bondholders are asked to accept bonds in exchange for their holdings in a new company, which has been formed to take over the MOP. Many of them will get some bonds and some stock. Many will get bonds at lower rates of interest. The whole scheme is to be carried out by getting all bondholders to accept new issues of bonds or stock in such a way that, hereafter, they will collect in fixed charges $7,503,000 instead of the present $24,897,000.

Obviously, if the fixed charges are reduced by that much, there will be a very great likelihood of there being something left for the stockholders. The stockholders will be preceded by far less of senior claims than would otherwise be the case. Alleghany Corporation is selling now around 1¼. MOP stock sells for about the same. Under the reorganization, the interest of the Alleghany Corporation in the MOP will be reduced in proportion, but in effect it will be enormously increased. What will happen to the prices of Alleghany and MOP stock if this plan goes through? The pickings in it for the reorganizers will run into many millions.

And who will be the sufferers? Well, have you ever seen Wall Street bankers weeping crocodile tears over the woes of the insurance companies and all those countless helpless policy holders whenever inflation is mentioned or someone suggests putting a railroad into bankruptcy to boil the water out of it? Well, the losers here will be those same little policy holders over whom the Morgans in their day have shed so many tears. To save a vast amount of worthless stock, which should be wiped out, but which the Morgans hold as collateral for a loan, the insurance-company bond holders are to be fed to the ravens.

For it is insurance companies that hold so large a share of the bonds of the MOP. That is why the insurance companies have organized a committee to oppose the Van plan. But we would feel more comfortable about it if J. Parker Gilbert, a Morgan partner, were not on that committee.

Are the I.C.C. and the R.F.C. going to throw the MOP back to the Van Sweringens and lend them government money? Charles A. Beard, who valiantly champions another

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set of bondholders, cites reasons why this should not be done: (1) When the Vans got the R.E.F. to lend $23,000,000 to the MOP they submitted a financial statement that R.F.C. lawyers denounced as an "amazing act of concealment." (2) The Vans, through one of their holding companies, unloaded $20,000,000 of terminal properties on the crippled MOP. Six lawyers, representing the government, have attacked this transaction and denounced it as done through "concealment, misrepresentation and secret profits." And (3) the Vans forced the MOP to spend millions when it was in bad shape, to buy in its own stocks, which had been issued in a speculative move.

But at least one thing seems certain. Neither the I.C.C. nor the R.F.C. should do anything to reëstablish the hold of these men on this great railroad until the committee of Senator Wheeler has had an opportunity to make its study of railroad reorganizations.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

The Great McGonigle

TO SEE the contour and splendid coloring of his nose, one would naturally assume that the worst enemy of W. C. Fields was himself. And this would be borne out by his reputation of some two years ago, which was that of a man who had not only lost his drawing power, but proved so testy and difficult to handle as to have washed himself up with movies for good. At one of the lowest of his low spots he even went to the R.K.O. lot and offered, for no pay at all, absolutely on spec, to conceive, write, dialogue, direct and act in a series of two reelers; and R.K.O. thereupon said, speaking personally to Mr. W. C. Fields, otherwise The Great McGonigle, Nuts.

Since then, of course, Fields has not only got back into pictures, but with a wallop, becoming one of Paramount's top-drawing male stars. And since then, especially during the past year, it has become a toss-up whether honors for worst enemy should got to him or his producers. He was given a walk-on in "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch" and his name was dishonestly starred on the marquee to float that whole lighter of garbage. In "It's a Gift," his presence dignified a magic-lantern show that as it stood could not, without the grace of block booking, have ever made the grade of being double billed into the neighborhood houses of Canarsie. He got considerably smothered in the costumed fakery of "David Copperfield"; he was practically all the bright moments in "Mississippi"; and now he is used as the sole come-on for one of the world's weariest: "The Man on the Flying Trapeze" (written, according to rumor, by the old boy himself).

Now the great, the one and only Fields picture could like as not be called "The Man on the Flying Trapeze" (in the present case the title has nothing to do with the film, which is about a memory expert and his family troubles). Fields is a set-up for the Big Top type of story—posing in striped tights and promoting a roll-the-ball game on the side, incurable in hokum but always secure in a foolish sort of dignity, alibi-ing and aside-ing down his tremendous nose even when most tangled up in the spaghetti; a stander-upper and perfect snide, loud with boasting, sophisticated in all the arts of the dodge, a barfly and stout man of the world; but married, and one step ahead of the constabulary, master of every house but his own. He is supreme in all these things, in this stock part—so much so that in his hands slapstick and stock parts become as naturally fresh as they were in their original intention, before automatic handling made them the blurred things they are. We would get one of the highlights in pictures if there could be found writers and a director who would take all this hokum for what is behind it, rediscovering the material.

But we will get precious little so long as Fields continues in his present rut, and so long as Paramount, having rebuilt the Fields name, continues to squander it by casting him as bit-player and shock-trooper for the smellers. Most stars can make or break, and who should worry. But Fields is more like a national resource: he should be got into his one ace picture before his time is out, because there is a certain savor still lacking in the national salt, there is a show about show business still to make.

No one can have drifted normally through the county fairs, chautauquas, coney islands, the carnival midways, circuses and stock companies trouping the whistle-stops of this country, without having some very definite feeling for its most fascinating business, which is show business. No one with any imagination can help being engaged by the idea of this society in miniature, more important to us than all the other kindred societies because it is in closer contact with all of us, its secret wisdom being that of bringing gawps to wonder and city slickers to be amused, by tricks and wiles and ballyhoo, at so much the copy all over the nation. And W. C. Fields, by virtue of his accessibility and talents, is one of the chief emissaries of this state—almost, so far as we are concerned, its first citizen. The branches of show business in which he moves with the most conviction are not the whole of the business, and his generation of showmen is passing away. He is not an actor in the universal sense: he has not built up a variety of parts, been a lot of people. But he has, without the assistance of any writer, made himself a single role that he can carry off with infinite variations, that will include a large chunk of our experience of a large chunk of America.

For humor in dialogue, I can remember better than anything else the scene with him bowling across the grounds of an awesome estate in a Model T full of family and out of control, shattering a seven-foot statue on the lawn and then explaining the whole thing with amazement and instant vindication, to his wife: "Why the man ran right in front of my car!" for humor in any routine, his jugglery of balls and cigar-boxes in "The Old Fashioned Way"; for implication by action his leadership of the troupe down Main Street, in the same picture, drum-majoring with his silk hat and cane, and sidestepping horse-droppings with the greatest of ease and no conscious attention whatever. He is a funny man, and also a perfect showman, in that his stage presence is never jarred. But he is something more, and has got to be something more before he is worth much time. In his representations there are reflected experiences outside himself, there is a focus of many things that go back to the somehow basic point of the place you were born in and learned to see and get around in. He is not only a funny man, he is a familiar and endearing figure, to be seen with mirth and remembered with special affection; a minor Jack Falstaff on the sawdust of the twentieth century.

OTIS FERGUSON.

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CORRESPONDENCE

A Kind Word for Caffrey

SIR: Referring to your editorial comment on Cuba in the issue of July 17: while I hold no brief for Mr. Caffrey as a courageous liberal or even as a person who can think for himself, nevertheless the question does arise as to how much autonomy the "little king" of Cuba has. Beals's article in the issue of July 3 does mention "Roosevelt's noble idea of a coalition" in the governing of Cuba; but he also comes down heartily on poor Jeff. You, of course, continuing an occasional policy of looking intensely at a tree and thereby missing somewhat the forest of which it is a part, say that Ambassador Caffrey continues "a policy of friendship for, and occasional active connivance with, a government regarded as more brutally tyrannical than even that of Machado."

Perhaps Jefferson does, once in a rare while, do things on his own hook—such things, for instance, as "taking no official notice whatsoever" of anything of real importance in Cuba. But Ambassador Caffrey is subject to instant recall by the Roosevelt administration. Everything he does must meet the explicit approval of a Rooseveltian policy so completely controlled by the Sugar lobby that Roosevelt himself can hardly be said to be a free agent. The onus for America's countenancing Cuba's new Capone is placed squarely in the capacious lap of what is, in the worst sense of the word, a political administration.

If we want to improve the diplomatic integrity of our Cuban office, we had better first improve Mr. Roosevelt, his clammy assistant, Mr. Hull, and—though this is laughably impossible—the cane-sugar powers behind the throne.

Chicago, Ill. GROFF CONKLIN.

Scholars on Relief

SIR: Certain facts concerning the labor aspects of the Larned Bibliography Project not reported by the Emergency Relief Bureau of New York City in its letter [The New Republic, May 5], may be of interest to your readers. Though the work required researchists possessing a scholarly background in American history, the salaries began at $30 a week. This was cut to $23.09; later to $19, before being raised to $21. There was an *attempt* to cut the salaries to $17.50, but a vigorous protest and publicity in The New York Post halted this.

The Emergency Relief Bureau letter states that "the Bibliography Project is being carried out, etc." The project was discontinued in January. The original reason given was that the research workers had so far outstripped the clerical work that it was necessary to discharge and transfer researchists until the clerical workers could catch up. The obvious absurdity of this reasoning must have become apparent, because later an excuse of no money available was given.

The real reason for the discontinuance of the project is indicated in the dismissal of two research workers. One was discharged for allegedly insulting a library guard; the other for having a "defiant attitude." Investigation as to the truth of the former charge began only after dismissal. We have never been able to discover precisely what a "defiant attitude" meant. The library officials were very much irritated because of a publication which relief workers issued as an organizing medium. They felt that this bulletin initiated and gave impetus to the Library Workers' Union, a union of regular employees. The library administration did not and does not want any unions on its premises. Again, as leaders in relief workers' organizations, the members of this project were considered by the relief administration to be of too great nuisance value and were immediately dubbed "agitators." Some of the research workers have been blacklisted by the Emergency Relief Bureau, transferred to isolated projects and refused better paying jobs.

O. R. FUSS, Secretary,
Associated Office and Professional
Emergency Employees.

New York City.

Regular Attendant

SIR: In the issue of July 24, under the caption "Love Me Some Other Time," Otis Ferguson gives an exhibition of what can be done by a "linomaniac" when in the mood. Words, words and more words. Each carefully manicured to impress unsophisticated readers—a conglomeration of verbosity from which it is not possible to extract a sentence of constructive value.

It may be true that "Love Me Forever" has defects, but it is also true that Miss Moore is daily bringing joy into the lives of hundreds of thousands of Americans. . . . This is of far greater human interest than the meaningless maundering of self-appointed critics whose greatest assets are a ready wit, freedom from writers' cramp and a copy of Webster's Unabridged.

Incidentally, your correspondent is not a "movie fan" in the accepted sense. Thirty years back a fairly regular attendance at London's Covent Garden Theatre, the Théâtre Francais in Paris and later the Metropolitan of New York has given a humanized perspective of stage and screen which includes a knowledge of the insidious method used by certain "critics" in their endeavor to "get the scalp" of a popular artiste. The method—a pen dipped in vitriolic liqueur camouflaged by perfumed verbiage.

Akron, Ohio. CHARLES HOWARD STEWART.

SIR: I check to the gent with the metaphors and vitriolic pen. Are my nibs red!

OTIS FERGUSON.

New York City.

Extracts from Letters

DAVID STRONG, of 262 Albion Place, Cincinnati, Ohio, writes to correct a reference to the Louisville housing case made in an editorial paragraph in our issue of July 24. Mr. Strong rightly points out that the Federal Circuit Court, which handed down the decision that we commented upon, is located not in Louisville, but in Cincinnati.

Mrs. Anthony Sini writes from Box 144, Shoreham, New York, to call attention to the International Correspondence for Peace and says that anyone interested in this movement may obtain further details from Mr. Leonard Holmes, 30 Scarisbrick New Road, Southport, Lancashire, England.

Gardner Jackson, as chairman, writes to tell us of the formation of the National Committee on Rural Social Planning. The Committee is making an extensive study of the whole question of rural and suburban planning, both as to general principles and specific projects such as the Rural Resettlement Administration and the Bankhead Farm Tenant Home bill, in the hope of formulating a unified policy for the country in the approach to problems whose solution vitally affects the welfare of urban as well as rural populations. The Committee will welcome suggestions, information and advice addressed to Miss Nancy Phelps, secretary-treasurer of the National Committee on Rural Social Planning, Room 505A, Insurance Building, Washington, D. C. Among members of the Committee are John P. Davis, secretary of the Joint Committee on National Recovery; Bishop Francis J. McConnell; Webster Powell of Farm Research, Inc.; Walter White, secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; Dr. Sidney E. Goldstein, chairman of the Social Justice Commission of the Central Conference of American Rabbis; and Professor Carl C. Zimmerman of Harvard University.

The Boro Park Branch of the Young People's Socialist League and League for Industrial Democracy is raising a fund for the relief of share-croppers in the South. They will be grateful for contributions sent to the Committee for Relief of Share-croppers, care of Hyman Fromowitz, 1067—54th Street, Brooklyn, New York City.

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Leopardi's Outline

Leopardi, by Iris Origo. With a foreword by George Santayana. New York: Oxford University Press. 227 pages. $4.

MARCHESA ORIGO'S book on Leopardi is excellent. It is a kind of biographical manual that English readers may be served by, a piece of work balanced, sane and on the whole distinguished. Its limits are definite, for there is no attempt to make it a study of Leopardi's contribution to literature. For that the reader is recommended to Mr. G. L. Bickersteth's preface to his translation of the "Poems"; and an admirable translation of Leopardi's prose work, his "Operette Morali," was made by James Thomson. Leopardi's writings have, in this new book, been considered only in so far as they throw light upon his life and character. As a man he revealed himself to us very completely. In his "Pensieri di Varia Filosofia e di Bella Litteratura," an encyclopedic notebook which he kept for eleven years of his life, and in his letters—as eloquent and revealing as any in literature—he has painted his own portrait, with a merciless and tragic sincerity. It is this picture that Marchesa Origo's volume undertakes.

To this clear and admirable outline of Leopardi's biography, Mr. George Santayana has contributed a foreword of a page and three-quarters. It is somewhat too handsome, perhaps, as if some over-Oxford urbanity were addressing a group of young ladies. Or perhaps I should say that Mr. Santayana evinces a certain facile, even squirting, sonority that, if considered beside the mere idea of Leopardi, is only boring and obese. But one good thing this foreword says, which is that what works the miracle in Leopardi is far from being mere sound or diction or the enigmatic suggestion of strange words. Leopardi's versification is remarkable only when a divine afflatus blows through it, which is not always. This afflatus is intellectual, this music is a flood of thoughts. We are transported out of ourselves esthetically, by the vision of truth.

Leopardi was born June 29, 1798, and died June 14, 1837, at the age of thirty-nine. His life from the start was unfortunate, and gradually, through the conditions of his existence and the afflictions of his body, tragic. The depression and the complaints that go up, the cries and despair, are not always pleasant reading. His history can become at times exasperating, even to one who knows what he suffered, and may be resented even when we know how fashionable sorrow was in that romantic epoch. The fact remains, nevertheless, that Leopardi's nature was basically just and superb. In his poetry at its best the melancholy personal circumstance that he presents to the world is kept within the scale of a humanity, justice, nobility and sweetness that confirm its total perfection.

In these days of ours one may in criticism, even without being able to read Italian, pronounce Dante third-rate and be heard at large in the land, provided one makes it personal and animated. And so, with high hopes for loudness, I should say that Leopardi's "L'Infinito," for example, or "La Quiete dopo la Tempesta" or "La Ginestra," are the finest poetry of the modern world. By the time Leopardi came along, metaphysics, as De Sanctis tells us, though at war with theology, had exhausted itself in an effort toward union with it. A new skepticism was arising that aimed not only at religion and the supernatural, but also at reason itself. The universal eclecticism had been only a Dead Sea of the intellect. Not only faith in revelation had gone, faith in philosophy was going also. Mystery came back: the shepherd and the philosopher knew one as much as the other. And Leopardi, in his immense solitude and pain, was the poet of this mystery. Leopardi's "Canti," De Sanctis says, are the deepest and most occult voices of that laborious transition that was called "the nineteenth century." The mystery destroys his intellectual world, but leaves inviolate his moral world. And this tenacious life of his inner world, despite the death of every philosophical and metaphysical world, is the original quality in Leopardi.

The course of Leopardi's life, his family, his childhood, early studies, scholarship, his relation to women, and finally the friendship with Ranieri, so much distorted in certain modern accounts, are all recorded by Marchesa Origo with discretion and good sense, with good taste and patience and with none of the sensational elements that would only violate the outline. So that without slurring the painful nature of this poet's life story, she leaves us free to consider the greatness of his genius. A reader for whom Italian is strange and Leopardi new might get here a conception of his history both fair and intelligently related to the English ways of thinking. Without going into his literary values to any greater extent than the book does, we may yet derive some conception of that grave fullness of knowledge that Matthew Arnold spoke of in Leopardi, that insight into the real bearings of the questions which as a skeptical poet he raised, that power of seizing the real point, that lucidity.

"Notre âge," wrote Sainte-Beuve seven years after Leopardi's death, *"a compté d'autres poètes et peintres du désespoir, Byron, Shelley, Obermann. . . . Mais Leopardi garde en lui ce trait distinctif qu'il était né pour être positivement un ancien, un homme de la Grèce historique ou de Rome libre, et celà sans déclamation aucune, et par la force même de sa nature. Il croyait que là seulement l'homme avait eu une vue simple des choses, un déploiement heureux et naturel de ses facultés."*

"His stature," Ranieri, his friend, tells us, "was mediocre, slight and bent, his complexion pale; his head was large, with a broad, square forehead, languid blue eyes, a sharp nose, and fine-drawn features. His voice was low and very faint, and he had an indescribable, heavenly smile."

The great De Sanctis says the same. He was a schoolboy in Naples, at the literature school of Marchese Basilio Puoti, when Leopardi came to visit there. "When the day came our expectations were very great. The Marchese was correcting a passage of Cornelius Nepos, which we had translated, but we could not attend: we were watching the door. At last entered Count Giacomo Leopardi! . . . All our eyes were upon him. The Colossus of our imagination seemed, at first sight, meanness itself; not only a man like other men, but inferior to others. In that emaciated expressionless countenance all the life was concentrated in the sweetness of his smile."

Without sentiment and without nonsense Marchesa Origo gets into her history this central soundness, sweet humanity, secret hunger, tragic courage and power.

STARK YOUNG.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Hell Under England[1]

BEGINNING some fifty years ago and reaching its crest with the new century, there was a flood of novels about the future of this planet. In some of them mankind was saved by science (as in most of H. G. Wells's utopian books), in others by socialism (as in "Looking Backward"), in still others by conversion to gentleness and unselfishness (as in "A Crystal Age") but in any case mankind was saved, was intellectually quickened, was spiritually ennobled, was released from its old burdens of poverty, disease and war. The optimism of Victoria's reign, based on a real and growing prosperity, projected itself into the future and encouraged the building of utopias all pink and white and guileless, like aseptic nurseries. But the novelists of those days also wrote books about the immediate past, in a more somber mood. They told how children grew up in stodgy Victorian households, under the whip, and how they revolted against a diet of sermons and suet puddings. In this second type of novel, everything was brown, dingy, sunless; romance was situated in the future.

Today the whole scheme has been reversed. Novels that deal with the late Victorian age (and they are written by the hundreds) generally lay stress on its pleasant qualities, its solidness, its peace of mind. Romance has cavalcaded backwards to the days of our mumsies and gampers. On the other hand, books about the future are being written in a mood of stark revulsion and of blurting out unpleasant truths. Realism has retreated to the year 2000, where Ariel used to sport with H. G. Wells.

Most of the new counter-utopian novels come from England. Their bleak pessimism is based, I think, on the fears of the British ruling caste, which finds its high position threatened by all sorts of enemies, domestic and foreign. The tendency among novelists is to magnify each of these threats into a future catastrophe that will destroy not only Britain but civilization as a whole. Sometimes it is the brown races that drown us all in savagery; more often it is the Bolsheviks surrounding Westminster Abbey in a hairy horde and almost but not quite raping the beautiful fiancée of Sir Alwyn Bruce-Fetheringham. The lower classes rise. A general war results in general asphyxiation, with no survivor except seventeen men and one girl who have wintered chastely on the South Polar ice. Still worse, still more appalling, there is no catastrophe at all, but the scientists get hold of us and erect an ideal society in which men are reduced to the level of housebroken guinea pigs.

"Land Under England," written by a Free-State Irishman who has let himself be absorbed by the English tradition, is not the best of the counter-utopian novels. Its style is too close to that of the shilling shocker. Generally the great English masters of the impossible story, beginning with Defoe and Swift, have written in a blunt and accurate fashion; they have taken great care to make their non-facts convincing. Mr. O'Neill, on the other hand, tries to heighten his horrors by writing about them in a gasping and swooning style that keeps us always conscious of their unreality. Another mistake is his failure to use modern anthropology and psychology in describing his strange country. It seems to me that science and pseudo-science should march abreast—as they do, for example, in a novel like "Brave New World." Still, "Land Under England" is an easy book to read. It offers a new conception of man's doom.

It is the story of Anthony Julian, a young English inventor, and of his trip into the underworld. The Julian family had always nursed the tradition of a subterranean country inhabited by descendants of the Roman legionaries, who had fled there to escape the Picts and Scots. Anthony found the path they had taken; he disappeared into the darkness with an electric torch and a bag of sandwiches. During the first part of his journey he met and escaped some very satisfactory monsters—man-eating toads as big as sheep, spiders three feet high that hunted in packs, forests of tall mushrooms lighted from below, by fungi like pale green lanterns. But it was some time later—after embarking on a river of salt water and drifting into an underground sea—that he witnessed the phantasmal future of mankind.

Here, in square roofless cities on the shore, lived a nation of little men with earth-colored faces; and here they had developed the sort of civilization that ours is likely to become. Here, overcome by loneliness and fear of the unending darkness, they had huddled so closely together that they had surrendered every item of individuality. One man was exactly like another; all were trained to automatic service of the omnipotent state. In this nest of termites, every man was granted just so much skill and knowledge as was necessary to perform his daily task. The rulers were the Masters of Knowledge, yet their lives, too, were warped and rendered grotesque by the business of ruling. And the crowning horror was that everybody thought himself happy, thought himself to be living in an ideal society which any worldling should be proud to join.

In a series of arguments between Julian and a Master of Knowledge, it becomes apparent that this underground state of the surviving Romans is a threat to our own way of life. For nearly two thousand years its inhabitants have lived there in peace, making no advances in technology but tremendously improving their knowledge of the human mind. They can read thoughts, they can train people to become demigods or automatons. Recently they have "absorbed" another visitor from the upper earth, and this man has formed a crazy project of world conquest. He thinks that by extracting all the scientific knowledge that Anthony Julian carries in his head, and by using it to direct the production of poison gas and machine guns, he can make the Roman State an irresistible conqueror. And here is Julian's comment:

> Their State could not have stood any real chance of an invasion of England under normal circumstances. But normal circumstances could not always be counted on, even in England. If . . . a Fascist or Nazi section of her own citizens made common cause with the underneath invaders, because of the similarity of their doctrines, nobody could tell what might happen.

In other words, the book is a parable of fascism and of the Totalitarian State. The little earth-colored men living in the hell under England are embodiments of the fears that lurk beneath the surface of the English mind. But the same statement applies to almost all of the counter-utopian novels. No matter how fantastic, no matter how rich in marvels and monsters, they really describe the world about us, the only world that their authors know.

MALCOLM COWLEY.

[1] Land Under England, by Joseph O'Neill. New York: Simon and Schuster. $2.

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The Anatomy of an Age

Early Victorian England: 1830-1865, Edited by G. M. Young. New York: The Oxford University Press. 2 vols. 1,006 pages. $14.

THIS SYMPOSIUM is a notable contribution to the study of the nineteenth century, in both soundness of method and richness of detail. Mr. Young has shown a singularly happy faculty in choosing his collaborators, and assigning to them their respective parts in the enterprise. "Work and Wages" is treated by J. H. Clapham, "Homes and Habits" by Mrs. C. S. Peel, "Town Life " by Mr. R. H. Mottram, and "Country Life" by Mr. Bernard Darwin, with special attention to the absorption of the Victorians in sport. These, with essays on the army, the navy and the mercantile marine, set forth the bones and sinews of an organism, which is then clothed with flesh by studies of the press, art, architecture, music, drama, holidays and travel, charity, expansion and emigration. The final essay, "The Portrait of an Age," includes interests otherwise unrepresented—religion, education, sanitation, etc.

Even so there are notable omissions—law, as the editor regretfully admits, and science, with its practical applications in engineering and medicine. The editor may plead that these topics to be treated adequately would require books of their own, and introduced into the present volumes would appear as mere summaries, out of keeping with his urbane plan of digesting knowledge into culture. Indeed, several of the present essays (notably Mr. A. E. Richardson's "Architecture"), valuable for encyclopedic information, tend to become lists of names and dates. Others, like Professor Nichol's "Theatre," are reduced to sketches in outline.

In general, however, subjects are treated with fine regard for the vitality of the fact as contributing to the development of a pattern which is itself alive. And the facts are drawn from sources surprising in number and variety. The recognized literature of the period is supplemented by obscure and often unpublished material: newspapers and magazines, diaries, family records, account books, advertisements, manuals of dress, behavior and cooking, and oral tradition. There are 137 admirably chosen illustrations.

One of the most significant and enlightening essays is that on the press, by E. E. Kellett. At the beginning of the period the illiteracy of the public was abysmal. "In 1838, in Southwark, 40 percent of the population could not read. In Manchester, in the same year, 55 percent signed the marriage register, 45 percent made a mark." It was, however, a part of the liberal philosophy of government that universal suffrage, giving to each class its due share of power in the state, must be supplemented by education to enable the individual to exercise that power wisely in his true interest. Hence, the reformers insisted on a Reading People, who would automatically throw off their sloth and seek liberty of action for the benefit of the mass of mankind. "Nothing strikes the student of the thirty years after the Reform Bill more forcibly than the naïve belief in this omnipotence of the printed word."

One of the first efforts of the reformers was to secure the repeal of the stamp and advertisement duties on newspapers and magazines. This tax on knowledge, which acted as a means of censorship, was not repealed, however, until 1861. Mr. Kellett notes an unsuspected effect of the advertisement duty on English criticism, since a favorable review was taxed as an advertisement. The belief of the reformers in the power of the press took effect in the development of the social theme in imaginative literature. Moreover, the growth of the newspapers and magazines made a journalistic apprenticeship a natural entry into literature, practised by Dickens as a daily reporter and Thackeray as a weekly or monthly commentator. In the ephemeral writing of the period Mr. Kellett finds the humus that enriched the soil for the nourishment of the seeds of genius in the Victorian masters.

In his "Portrait of an Age," Mr. Young notes the moral features determined by Evangelicalism, the surviving form of Puritanism that animated the middle class:

> The virtues of a Christian after the Evangelical model were early exchangeable with the virtues of a successful merchant or a rising manufacturer, and a more than casual analogy could be established between Grace and Corruption and the Respectable and the Low. The Evangelicals gave to the island a creed which was at once the basis of its morality and the justification of its wealth and power, and with the creed, that sense of being an Elect People which, set to a more blatant tune, became a principal element in Later Victorian Imperialism.

The visible sign of such election by grace was the material prosperity which with few interruptions increased after 1815:

> Between 1815 and 1830 the purchasing capacity of the classes above the wage-earning level was all but doubled—and the Victorian belief in progress was bottomed on the complacency which comes of steadily rising incomes and steadily improving security.

Meanwhile the intellectual expression was fixed by Utilitarianism. Both the Evangelical and the Utilitarian movements rested upon doctrines that were "the reflection of an exceptional experience, the religious experience of a nation undergoing a moral revival, its social experience during a revolution in the methods of production." This industrial revolution, with the immense growth of population and its aggregation in cities, was the cardinal fact of the age. The Victorians, as Mr. Young notes, had no word for unemployment: through the eyes of Malthus they saw only overpopulation. While industry made possible the support of an increasing number of people, its machinery reduced the value of labor so that the worker was constantly threatened with starvation in the midst of plenty. The Utilitarian, it is true, had the notion of applying intelligence to social problems, but in fact his economics, like the religion of the Evangelical, tended towards splitting society into two classes, possessors and proletariat, a process that eventuated in the class war. Thus the Victorian Age, with its massive façade, was poised in the unstable equilibrium of a compromise, which revealed itself increasingly as hypocrisy. "Its practical ideals were at odds with its religious professions, and its religious belief was at issue with its intelligence."

The early Victorians felt themselves rich in values of knowledge. They held fast the truth of revelation and took pride in the truth of science, with as yet no sense of their incompatibility. They were rich in values of action. They held to the good by a definite code of personal behavior, which was not hostile to individual success, and they translated parts of it into humanitarian and philanthropic projects, again with no sense of incompatibility between individual and social values. They knew their deficiency in esthetic values; for them the beautiful lacked the authority of the true and the good. Mr. Young notes that the English mind employed "the energy imparted by Evangelical conviction to rid itself of the restraints which Evangelicalism

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had laid on the senses and the intellect." This is, however, the story of the next generation, when to Thomas Arnold, Carlyle, Macaulay, Palmerston and Tennyson, succeeded Matthew Arnold, Ruskin, Darwin, Disraeli and Browning. It is perhaps with this vista opening in expectancy that Mr. Young declares: "Of all decades in our history a wise man would choose the eighteen-fifties to be young in."

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

Political Philosophies

The Citizen and His Government, by Alfred E. Smith. New York: Harper and Brothers. 273 pages. $2.50.

A Better Economic Order, by John A. Ryan. New York: Harper and Brothers. 203 pages. $2.50.

Socializing Our Democracy, by Harry W. Laidler. New York: Harper and Brothers. 340 pages. $3.

IT IS true that all of us, in greater or less degree, are likely to cut our political and economic proposals according to our personal interests and prejudices. Thus Mr. Smith, the practical politician, sees the task of improving government primarily as a technical problem having little more than incidental relationship to the pressing economic and social problems of the day. Father Ryan, the most intelligent of the contemporary political economists of the Roman Catholic Church in America, calls for both political and economic reconstruction along lines that would meet the objective requirements of the Holy See. Dr. Laidler, who is the intellectual-in-chief of the Socialist Party of America, would go farther than Father Ryan in the matter of reconstruction, but not so far as to wound the petit-bourgeois sensibilities of his fellow intellectuals in the socialist movement.

Mr. Smith's argument, in "The Citizen and His Government," is largely superficial. It consists mostly of an appeal for a deeper understanding of the technical character of the existing governmental structure, and for more economical government (in the name of the taxpayers) through reorganization and consolidation of countless outdated or overlapping local political units and offices. He holds, *inter alia,* that there should be fewer elective offices and that the power of the legislative to enact laws covering a multitude of minor questions of an administrative nature should be rigidly restricted. While he agrees that "one of the chief aims of government" is "the promotion of public welfare," his own views with regard to social legislation reveal that he himself has grown but little in recent years. The sort of government he favors would doubtless relieve us of many evils, but it would not begin to approach the major problems we must face.

Father Ryan is still the exponent of what he calls "distributive justice," but since he first began expounding this theory Pius XI has come to his aid with his encyclical of May 15, 1931. Both the "Quadragesimo Anno" and Father Ryan's writings recognize by implication that world capitalism cannot long survive—at least in its present form. And both seem to realize that if capitalism finally collapses, the Holy Church will also and inevitably be brought down. Witness only the horrible example set before the Vatican by Soviet Russia. So the objective is to reform capitalism, but to do it in such a way as to safeguard the interests of Catholicism.

The attainment of this goal, as one may gather from "A Better Economic Order," will be no mean task. Socialism as an alternative to capitalism has, of course, to be explained away. Under socialism industrial management "would be at once inefficient and despotic"; the efficiency of labor would also be diminished; liberty would be greatly restricted, if not abolished altogether; and the incentive given by the hope of personal gain would be lost, for it is "pure delusion" that the majority of workers can be moved by any other incentive. Communism is even worse. "Anyone," says Father Ryan, "who knows communism as exemplified in Russia today and who is still willing to live in a communist state as a private citizen, is a fit subject for the judicial process known as *de lunatico inquirendo.*" Fascism holds out more hope, for it "has some good features," among them "the rejection of individualism and liberalism." But unrestrained fascism is not to be thought of, for it preaches "the doctrine of the absolute, omnipotent and totalitarian state."

Father Ryan's answer to the larger problem is "distributism." Private property must be preserved and distributed more equitably among the masses. Big owners of income must submit to regulation and control. Profits should be shared with workers. The state should intervene to achieve these and similar ends—but not to any extent that would jeopardize the extensive vested interests of the Church. Father Ryan must fall back upon morality as the chief solution of economic problems. If we can only make honest men of the monopolists, he seems to say, the falling rate of profit will not matter.

In "Socializing Our Democracy," Dr. Laidler has written another defense of what Father Ryan calls "mitigated socialism: American socialism." His latest work is really an apology. He tries desperately to explain and prove that socialism is not nearly so bad as its enemies contend. Indeed, he draws a pleasing and convincing picture of life in a social democracy, but stumbles painfully when he seeks to suggest ways and means of bringing this utopia into being. Here, as usual, he places himself above reality. He has learned something from the experience of the Germans and Austrians. It is now no longer a certainty that the Socialists will be able simply to march to the polls and vote themselves into power. Against their better inclinations, they may actually have to fight. Yet Dr. Laidler remains far from convinced that the bourgeoisie cannot be persuaded to submit peacefully to socialism—though, curiously enough, he quotes the British Socialists to a far greater extent in support of this argument than he does the Germans and Austrians.

And since everything is to be done peaceably and legally, the matter of compensating the owners of the property to be taken over by the socialist regime rises large in Dr. Laidler's mind. How much ought they to be paid and what form should the payment take? But if the theory of surplus labor value has any meaning, it is that this industrial plant and other property belongs to labor. Why, then, talk of compensation? Do the Socialists really believe that the bankers and industrialists can be thus easily bribed into accepting socialism? But such questions are unreal for another reason. The American Socialists have in the last thirty-five years progressed no further than the swivel-chair sector of Fifteenth Street. They hold no important offices and will not build a party organization suited to the political necessities of the capitalist state, which they hope to capture by wholly legal political means. (They might learn a great deal from the first chapter of Mr. Smith's book describing the local political club.) It seems just a trifle absurd, therefore, for them to be explaining how nice and well behaved they will be when they finally become strong enough, numerically speaking, to take over the government of the United States.

MAURITZ A. HALLGREN.

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Some Recent Novels

The Land of Shvambrania, by Leo Kassil. New York: The Viking Press. $2.50.

THE DAYDREAMS of the repressed children of the professional classes have too often tended to be no more than shadowy accompaniments of wishes and sensations. Fortunately this was not so with the author of the present volume and his younger brother, Oska, sons of a Jewish physician dwelling in what is now Engels, the capital of the German Republic of the Lower Volga. Racial and parental oppression, in their younger days, put the two to the test, and they emerged with the Shvambranian flag flying. They imagined a country with, first of all, a definite geographical form and a definite position in space. They devised a history for it. Then they took up the task of carrying on its history, day by day, through voyages, expeditions, wars, partitions, treaties and every other means of which they could catch a hint from the greater world of Russia and the West. All this they supported with written documents and graphic designs, ingenious and humorous: the outline of Shvambrania was taken from a tooth appearing in a dentist's sign, and among the prominent personages of the country were the Countess Cascara Sagrada and Count Urodonal Chatelain.

The two boys carried on this fascinating foolery even after Saratov, across the river, had fallen to the Bolsheviks and the conduct book of Tsarist schooldays was a thing of the past—even after the Cheka came by chance upon the Shvambranian archives and investigated their creators. It was the coming of a Communist girl cousin from Moscow and the youngsters' participation in cultural construction with the children of the town that ended the history of Shvambrania. Leo Kassil deserves our thanks for not allowing its records to be lost without trace.

MURRAY GODWIN.

Deep Dark River, by Robert Rylee. New York: Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

NOVELS about the Southern Negro, like those about the South, fall into two general divisions—those that see the Negro through the mist and haze of the plantation-aristocratic tradition and those that try to picture him as he really is: a human being in an unfortunate and frequently intolerable environment. Mr. Rylee's book comes within the latter category. It is serious and painstakingly honest, its author was obviously motivated by something deeper than a mere desire to write a book, and when it is finished one feels, or (if one's experience happens to coincide with that of Mr. Rylee) one knows, that this is the way a Negro's life in the South is often lived.

"Deep Dark River" does not, as one might believe from reading the Sunday reviewers, explore altogether new territory. Other adventurers have preceded Rylee and have returned from the foreign country below the Smith and Wesson Line carrying journals filled with similar impressions. The trail blazers were Joel Chandler Harris, whose "Free Joe" (among other stories) questions the traditional happiness of slave life; and George Washington Cable, whose story in "The Grandissimes" of the captured African king sold into slavery is one of the most tragic histories in American literature. Others have followed them. Mr. Rylee's novel, in its general theme and feeling, is reminiscent, though not at all imitative, of a somewhat similar novel published a few years ago—Mr. Welbourn Kelley's excellent "Inchin' Along."

The story it tells is that of a simple, honest Negro who wants to be a preacher and who, because he has aroused the enmity of as despicable a set of scoundrels as ever lived off weaker human flesh, is finally sent to prison, after a trial by fixed jury, for killing another Negro who was hired to kill him. Mr. Rylee's portrait of Mose is not, by a long shot, "the most profound and beautiful of a Negro ever written." In fact, it is precisely when Mr. Rylee is aiming for profundity and beauty that the book goes soft. There are many passages in Mose's sermons that sound manufactured and contrived; and the author's excursions into poetical mysticism, as well as his epigrams, never quite come off.

But the book does not depend for its effect upon such adornments: it is based on a solid understanding of the Negro's position in the South. And Mose himself is more than a character in a book—we can believe in him; there are even a few places where he steps down from the pages and walks the earth like a natural man.

HAMILTON BASSO.

Fortune and Men's Eyes, by George Cronyn. New York: Covici, Friede. $2.50.

TAKE SOCIETY, turn it about like a revolving statue, eye it less as an artist than as a museum official drafting an inventory, and you have Mr. Cronyn's "Fortune and Men's Eyes." Through the dual account of a psychiatrist and of Byron Pierce, whose loves, artistic struggles and economic vicissitudes form the body of the book, the author probes into the maladjustments of a family of the Middle West.

An afternoon with a Malay virgin on a sleeping mat in a Tagalog hut is the first of a series of episodes and conflicts besetting the Reverend Charles Worden Pierce and his sons. Of the three Pierce brothers, Max represents the extreme right, Clyde the extreme left. There is something vigorous and open about Clyde, something thwarted and secretive about Max. Clyde is the future, Max the sterile present. Byron, the architect, stands alone, midway between Max and Clyde; his is the problem that is most acute until he solves it by jerking free from the ignorant universe of his wife and mother-in-law.

A strong crusading spirit insinuates itself into Mr. Cronyn's story. Max commits suicide. He had attained the wealth and social position he had always set his heart on, yet these do not suffice to make life worth clinging to. In a life dominated by group compulsion, Max's last act, in preferring self-destruction to divorce, is one of surrender—whatever his marital hangovers or physiological propensities. Through Max, and through the gossipy Ma Hardicut, Mr. Cronyn shows up the failings of our twentieth-century America. What unity the book has, derives from this implicit social perspective.

The story is singularly lacking in any inner cohesion of emotional material or of events. Certain rich dramatic possibilities are not worked into a concentrated whole. If art consists in slashing the unnecessary to enlarge upon the essentials, then the group of incidents Mr. Cronyn has accumulated behind his characters, although such details are shrewdly observed, are unstressed and of little worth

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artistically. In parts he fails to exploit the fields of comment and recapitulation open to the psychiatrist; in other parts, he overrides a technique that bars complete knowledge of the issues to the narrator. But drawing its interpretations less from artistic endeavor than from a record of fact, his book strikes out for new values and a new order. It is graphic, credible, unsentimentalized and highly intelligent.

FRANCES VALENSI.

Lost Shadows, by Osyp Turiansky. New York: Empire Books. $2.

LIKE SO many of the impassioned war novels produced by men who fought with the Central Powers, Turiansky's harrowing tale of seven prisoners lost in the Albanian mountains is lightly fictionalized autobiography. But where Remarque and Zweig used the novel to bind up the total war adventures of one hero, Turiansky worked in miniature; like Barbusse and Humphrey Cobb he attempted to depict a crisis within a crisis. What happened to the seven prisoners who murdered their Serb guard on the way to an Italian prison camp and were left stranded "between Galicia and the Adriatic Sea" was, of course, an "accident"; but one of the many that occurred to sixty thousand prisoners in the winter of 1915. And yet Turiansky has set out to give simply and without bitterness a kind of spiritual induction; to represent in one halting step the full sweep of the world's dance of death. With that lovely and oddly moving lyricism possessed by most Ukranian writers, he is, at the same time, able to fit snugly into his novel's structure a sense of personal bewilderment and agony that makes his book glow.

By suffering together, his characters come to sense, in a dim way, the limitations of their education, mostly religious and metaphysical, and its trivial opportunities for social awareness. To piece out of their suffering some cause for things, to make every moment of calm yield some link with a larger reality, they take refuge in the past. When they are casting lots to determine which of them shall die and thus provide clothing for fuel, they gravely and naïvely discuss the nature of the state and then suddenly flee to the memories of their youth. The young Hungarian believes he sees Christ walking on the snow and falls into the chasm trying to reach Him; and Turiansky mutters *piznayesh* ("Do you recognize us, Father? Father, do you know us?"). And although Turiansky lived to tell his tale (writing it in the very prison camps where so few of his comrades arrived), the mark of death and suffering is everywhere upon it. Perhaps Aimée Dostoevsky's insistence that her father was really Ukranian needs no better proof than this recreation of the tortured soul of Ivan Karamazov in the body and living flesh of his brother Dmitri.

ALFRED KAZIN.

Second Hoeing, by Hope Williams Sykes. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. $2.50.

Hannah, the heroine of this novel, is the daughter of a Volga-German immigrant, a renter in the beet fields of northern Colorado. Her family's struggle in this specialized agriculture, with mother and children working endless hours in the fields, provides the background for Hannah's own battle with ambition and duty, with family loyalty and her love for the landowner's son. Her father, a greedy, untiring taskmaster, becomes understandable and pitiable as his daughter comes to appreciate the circumstances that have conditioned him. The hardships and poverty of the beet fields are shown as resulting from the failure of the growers to organize themselves against the sugar factories. By the author's division of the book into four parts: Plant-

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